

This page is to support the viewing of two-page within the .pdf viewer.

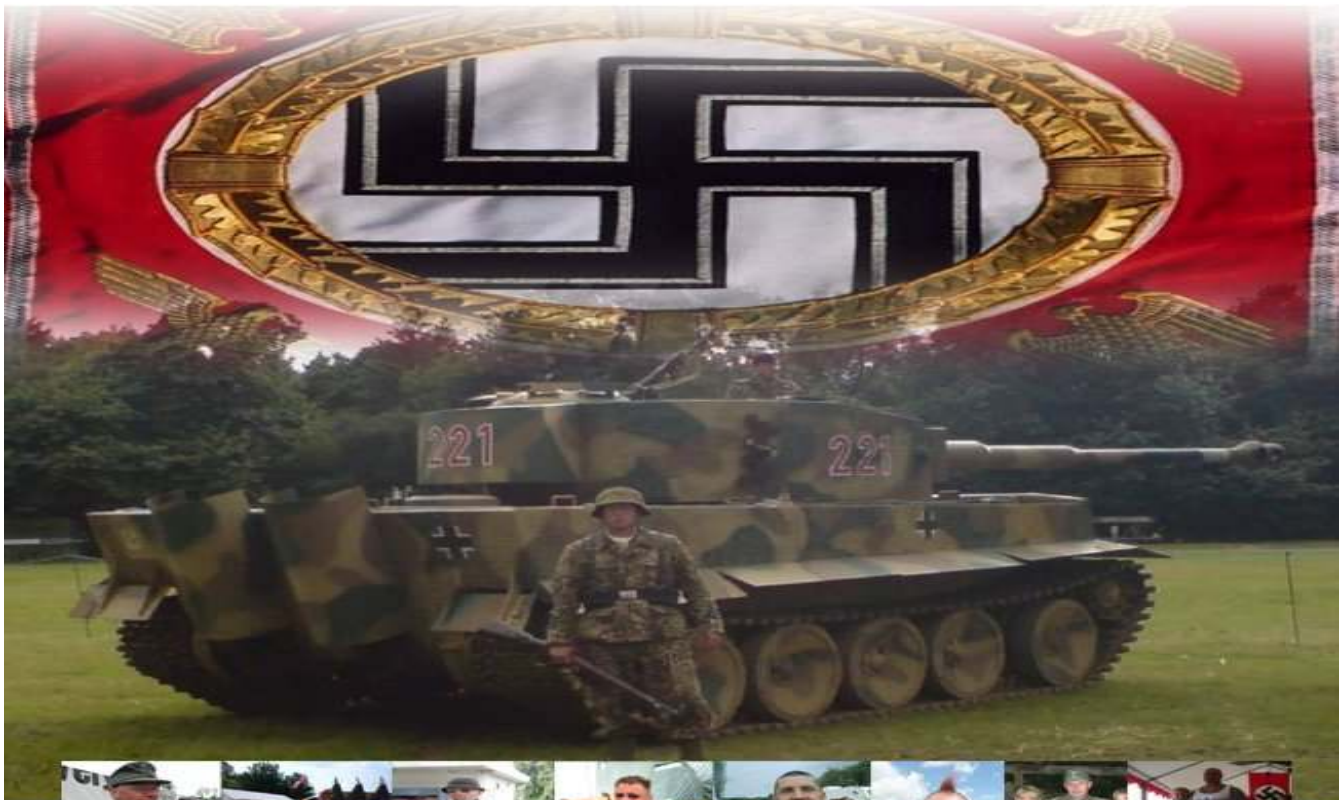
Originally published by Bright Star Publishing plc
Dalling Road, LONDON W6 0ES

Originally produced by Midsummer Books Ltd
Dalling Road, LONDON W6 0ES

This e-edition produced by
www.hitlersthirdreich.co.uk



Der Krieg und Frieden Show ²⁰¹¹ Die größte Militärfahrzeug spektakulärsten der Reich



WWW.WARANDPEACESHOW.CO.UK

CONTACT US ON THE WAR AND PEACE DIRECT LINE
TEL 0044 (0)1304-813945 FAX 0044 (0)1304-812422

SEE US AT THE HOP FARM - PADDOCK WOOD, KENT TN12 6PY

HITLER'S

Third Reich

Volume
15
Monthly

Witness the terrible secrets of Germany's evil empire

'Sepp' Dietrich
Hitler's Bodyguard Commander

The Holocaust
How much did the Germans know?

North Africa 3
The End in Africa

Propaganda
Selling the Nazi Lie

Hitler's Putsch
Failed revolution in Munich

£2.95 Monthly

ISSN 1464-1968



UK £2.95
IR £3.25
Australia \$7.95
New Zealand \$9.95

South Africa R24.95
Singapore S\$7.95
Malaysia R\$7.95
Malta Lm 1.95

HITLER'S Third Reich

Volume 15 Contents

- 1**
Secret Hitler Files
Hitler's Putsch
- 6**
Inside the Third Reich
Propaganda: Selling the Nazi Lie
- 14**
Nazi Horrors
Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust
- 22**
Inside the Third Reich: Hitler's Henchmen
Sepp Dietrich: Master of Hitler's Guard
- 26**
Hitler's Battles 15
Western Desert 1943: The End in Africa
- 34**
Hitler's War Machine
Fallschirmjäger: Hunters from the Skies
- 40**
Nazi Symbols
Hitler as Icon
- 44**
A-to-Z of the Third Reich
'Messerschmitt A.G.' to 'Mussolini'

Publisher: Stan Morse
Editor: Chris Bishop
Deputy editor: Adam Warner
Art Director: Steve Horton
Illustrator: Peter Harper
Photography: David Tosh
Writers: Chris Bishop, Kurt Steiner, Adam Warner, William Wilson

<http://www.hitlersthirdreich.co.uk>

Our thanks to Ulric of England (PO Box 285, Epsom, Surrey KT17 2YJ) for allowing us to photograph items from his extensive collection.

Picture acknowledgments

1: Suddeutscher Verlag; Aerospace Publishing; 2: Aerospace (two), Suddeutscher; 3: Aerospace (three), Suddeutscher; 4: Suddeutscher (two); 5: Aerospace (two); 6: Suddeutscher; 7: Aerospace (four); 8: Aerospace (two); 9: Aerospace, Suddeutscher (three) 10: Suddeutscher, Aerospace (two); 11: Aerospace; 12: Aerospace, Suddeutscher; 13: Aerospace (six); 14: Suddeutscher; 15: Topham Picturepoint, Aerospace; 16: Popperfoto (three); 17: Popperfoto, Suddeutscher (three), Aerospace; 18: Popperfoto, Suddeutscher; 19: Suddeutscher (five); 20: Topham, Aerospace; 21: Suddeutscher (two), Aerospace; 22: Suddeutscher Verlag; 23: Suddeutscher Verlag; 24: Aerospace, Suddeutscher Verlag (two) 25: Suddeutscher Verlag (three); 26-33: Aerospace; 34-38: Aerospace; 39: Aerospace (four), Bundesarchiv (two); 40: Aerospace (two); 43: Aerospace; 44: Aerospace (four); 45: Popperfoto (two), Aerospace; 46: Aerospace (two), Topham; 47: Topham, Aerospace, Topham, Popperfoto; 48: Popperfoto, Topham, Aerospace.

Published monthly by
Bright Star Publishing plc
179, Dalling Road
London W6 0ES

Produced by Midsummer Books Ltd
179, Dalling Road
London W6 0ES
©2000 Midsummer Books Ltd

Colour reproduction by
Catalyst Publishing, Leamington Spa

Printed in Italy by Officine Grafiche De Agostini

This publication may not be reproduced in whole or in part in any form or by any means without the prior permission of Midsummer Books Ltd. All rights reserved. This publication may not be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of by way of trade at more than the recommended selling price shown on the cover, or in a mutilated condition

UK and EIRE

Collect your copies of *Hitler's Third Reich* by placing a regular order with your newsagent today

Subscriptions

For information on how to take out a subscription, call Woodgate Fulfillment on 08707 270227 or visit our Web site at <http://www.hitlersthirdreich.co.uk>

Back Numbers

You can order back numbers from your newsagent, or by writing to:
Woodgate Fulfillment
PO Box 130
Hastings
Sussex
TN35 4ZD

Each volume costs £2.95 Sterling (Ir£3.25)
Each volume including video series costs £5.95 Sterling (Ir£6.75)

Credit card orders can be made by phone on 08707 270227

For wholesale trade distribution please contact COMAG Magazine Marketing on 01895 444055

OVERSEAS MARKETS

Subscriptions (Australia & South Africa)

Australia: Contact: Midsummer Books Subscriptions (Dept.H), PO Box 460, EASTERN MC VIC 3110. Telephone: (03) 9872 4000. Fax: (03) 9872 5454. E-mail: bissett@bissettmags.com.au
South Africa: Contact: Midsummer Books Subscriptions (Dept.H), Private Bag 10, Centurion, 0046. Telephone: (011) 652 1835 Fax: (011) 314 2984. E-mail: subscribe@jacklin.co.za

Back numbers (Australia & NZ & South Africa)

You can order your back numbers from your local newsagent, or by writing to one of the following addresses:

Australia: Midsummer Books Back Numbers (Dept.H), Gordon & Gotch Ltd, Private Bag 290, Burwood, VIC 3125. Telephone: (03) 9805 1887. Please enclose payment of cover price, plus \$ 1.50 per issue postage & handling. Cheques should be made payable to Gordon & Gotch Ltd.

New Zealand: Midsummer Books (Dept.H), Gordon & Gotch (NZ) Ltd, P.O. Box 584, Auckland. Telephone: 09 625 3018. Please enclose payment of cover price, plus \$ 1.50 per issue postage & handling. Cheques should be made payable to Gordon & Gotch Ltd.

South Africa: Midsummer Books (Dept.H), Private Bag 10, Centurion, 0046. Telephone: (011) 652 1835 Fax: (011) 314 2984 E-mail: service@jacklin.co.za (please make cheques payable to Midsummer Subscription Services)

ISSN 1464-1976 (with video)
ISSN 1464-1968 (without video)



HITLER'S Putsch

On 8 November 1923 Hitler, at the head of the German Combat League, tried to overthrow the Bavarian State. The coup attempt ended in fiasco and imprisonment. But Hitler was later to sanctify the Putsch as the start of his 'heroic' struggle.



Members of the Bund Oberland march in Munich on the day of the Putsch. Formed in 1921, it allied with the NSDAP and the Reichskriegsflagge on 2 September 1923 to form the German Combat League. Four members of the Bund were to die in the Putsch, and its leader Friederich Weber was a main defendant at the ensuing trial.





Above: Julius Streicher addresses Freikorps units and members of the public in Munich's Marienplatz on 9 November 1923. They do not know it, but the Putsch is already doomed.



Left: The crowds packed into the Bürgerbräukeller were there to hear von Kahr's address. Instead, at 8.30 pm Hitler announced a revolution with a pistol shot through the upstairs ceiling.

Below: Following Hitler's proclamation, makeshift barricades were thrown up outside the War Ministry in Ludwigstrasse. SA men and Freikorps members vainly await the revolution. In the centre holding the Imperial flag is a young Heinrich Himmler.



FOLLOWING THE NAZI electoral success in 1933, the attempted take over of the government of Bavaria by Hitler and the Nazis in 1923 known as the Munich or Beer hall Putsch was given a 'makeover' and turned into a political myth. The actual events and the myth are as dissimilar as Hollywood's Gunfight at the OK Corral and the squalid, murderous shoot out which actually took place at Tombstone.

Every 9 November after the Nazi seizure of power, the venerated survivors of this ill-conceived coup silently re-enacted their march through the crowd-lined streets of the Bavarian capital. The anniversary of the Munich Putsch was the holiest day of the Nazi calendar, since it marked the day when the movement was sanctified by the blood of martyrs. Burning beacons like giant funeral pyres marked the route and at the *Feldherrnhalle* – the Hall of Heroes, Munich's war memorial hall. Here the names of the sixteen men killed by the police were solemnly declaimed. They are a curious group:

Alfarth, Felix, merchant (b. 5 July 1901)
Bauriedl, Andreas, hat maker (b. 4 May 1879)
Casella, Theodor, bank official (b. 8 August 1900)
Ehrlich, Wilhelm, bank official (b. 9 August 1894)
Faust, Martin, bank official (b. 27 January 1901)
Hechenberger, Anton, locksmith (b. 28 September 1902)
Körner, Oskar, merchant (b. 4 January 1875)
Kuhn, Karl, headwaiter (b. 26 July 1897)
Laforce, Karl, student engineer (b. 28 October 1904)
Neubauer, Kurt, servant (b. 27 March 1899)
Pape, Klaus von, merchant (b. 16 August 1904)
Pfordten, Theodor von der, counsel on the State Supreme Court (b. 14 May 1873)
Rickmers, Joh, retired cavalry captain (b. 7 May 1881)
Scheubner-Richter, Max Erwin von, doctor of engineering (b. 9 January 1884)
Stransky, Lorenz Ritter von, engineer (b. 14 March 1899)
Wolf, Wilhelm, merchant (b. 19 October 1898)

So what was the reality of the Munich Putsch? On 22 October 1922 the Italian Fascist leader Benito Mussolini had led The March on Rome, and backed by 50,000 black shirted Fascists had pressurised the government into making him Prime Minister. Hitler saw this as the model for his grab at power.

On 8 November 1923 Gustav Ritter von Kahr (1862-1934) the leader of the right-wing nationalist Bavarian People's Party was due to address a patriotic meeting at the Bürgerbräukeller beer hall in Munich. The Bavarian Cabinet had made him the



Blutfahne



PROBABLY THE MOST REVERED symbol in the Third Reich, the *Blutfahne* was one of the flags used during the abortive Munich Putsch of 1923. Carried by Heinrich Trambauer as the Nazis clashed with state police in Odeon Square, it was bullet riddled and soaked in the blood of those killed and wounded during the rising. Originally the company flag of the 5th SA, it was confiscated by the Munich 'Green' police and only recovered from them in 1925, when it was remounted on to a two part black pole with a unique wreath flag top. The pole also contained a dedication plate listing the names of the *Gefallenen*. Regarded as a holy relic, it was placed in the keeping of the SS in 1926, and Jakob Grimminger was appointed standard bearer. Grimminger was a veteran of both World War I and of street fights with the communists, and would remain in his position as standard bearer until the Blood Banner disappeared at the end of the war.

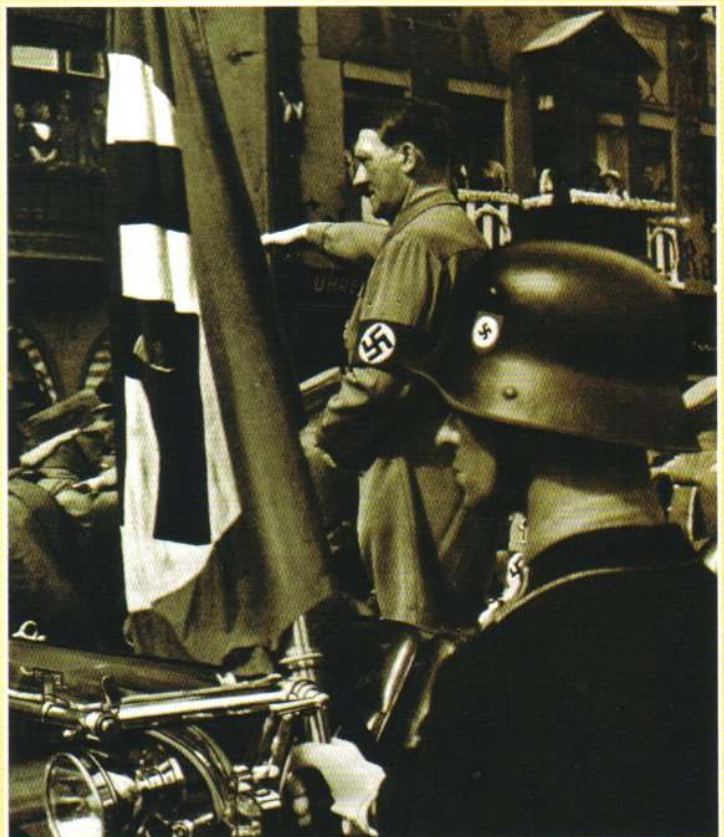
The *Blutfahne* was displayed at all major Nazi ceremonies, the most prominent of which was the 'consecration' of the *Feldzeichen* or banners of newly-formed SA units and SS *Standarten*. These almost invariably took place during the annual Nuremberg party rallies. In a ritual which resembled the blessing of military colours in Christian armies, Hitler acted like a high-priest. Holding the Blood Banner in one hand and the new standard in the other, he acted as the medium by which the magic of one sacred symbol was transmitted to the other. By holding the two flags in contact for a few seconds, the *Blutfahne* made a 'mystic' connection between the new Nazi units and the fighters and martyrs of the early days of the movement.

The last public appearance of the flag was at the burial of Adolf Wagner, Gauleiter of Munich-Upper Bavaria, in April 1944.

Top: The scene at the Odeonsplatz in Munich depicted with artistic licence. It was Ludendorff and not the Führer who stood up to the police.

Top right: Engravings of the revered martyrs of 9 November.

*Right: Hitler pictured at Nuremberg with the *Blutfahne* and Otto Grimminger alongside. Grimminger died in obscurity and poverty on 28 January 1969 at the age of 77. He took with him to the grave the secret of the disappearance of the Nazi 'Grail'.*





Proklamation an das deutsche Volk!

**Die Regierung der November-
verbrecher in Berlin ist heute für
abgesetzt erklärt worden.**

Eine
**provisorische deutsche
Nationalregierung
ist gebildet worden, diese besteht aus
Gen. Ludendorff
Ad. Hitler, Gen. v. Lossow
Obst. v. Seisser**

Above: The conspirators optimistically pronounced: "Proclamation to the German people! The Government of the November criminals has today been deposed. A provisional national German government has been formed. It consists of General Ludendorff, Adolf Hitler, General von Lossow and Colonel von Seisser." The last two cabinet members had been co-erced at gun-point.

Top: After the shooting at the Odeonsplatz, cavalry units form up to bar the escape of the Putschists. The revolution fizzled out as rapidly as it had started. One commentator wrote: "In this year 1923, the Swastikas and stormtroops disappeared, and the name of Adolf Hitler fell back almost into oblivion. Nobody thought of him any longer as a possible in terms of power."

General State Commissioner of Bavaria with full emergency powers to suppress rightist demonstrations.

Beer halls had been built by Munich breweries not only for use by individual customers but also for large groups, clubs or political organisations. At the Bürgerbräukeller, von Kahr was accompanied by senior officials including General von Lossow, commander of the armed forces of Bavaria and Colonel Hans von Seisser, Chief of the Bavarian State Police.

THE BÜRGERBRÄUKELLER SHOT

As Kahr was speaking Hitler and Goering surrounded by supporters entered the hall, strode up to the stage where Hitler drew a pistol and fired a shot into the ceiling. "The national revolution has broken out!" he shouted and added, "The hall is filled with 600 armed men. No one is allowed to leave. The Bavarian government and the government of Berlin are hereby deposed. A new government will be formed at once. The barracks of the Reichswehr and the police barracks are occupied. Both have rallied to the swastika!"

The reality was that though SA men surrounded the hall and a machine gun covered the main entrance, the rest was bluff. Hitler was gambling, but ordered the three Bavarian leaders off the stage into a side room. Here he berated them and said he would be forming a new government with the war hero General Erich Ludendorff. The Bavarian officials were not to be brow-beaten and demanded to know what Hitler thought he was doing. Enraged, Hitler ran

from the room and back on stage shouted.

"Tomorrow will find a national government in Germany, or it will find us dead!"

Bluff turned to farce as Ludendorff arrived in the hall. After World War I Ludendorff had been drawn to right wing politics by his second wife, Dr Mathilde Spiess Ludendorff. With her he established the Tannenberg Bund which was dedicated to a struggle against the 'powers above the state' – Jews, Jesuits, Freemason and Marxists. He was instantly recognised by the bemused crowd in the hall who gave a thunderous cheer. Ludendorff now denounced Hitler for not clearing the planned coup with him in advance. Hitler ignored the slight and announced to the audience "I have at last fulfilled the oath I swore five years ago as a blind cripple in a military hospital!"

VON KAHR'S FATAL HESITATION

Hitler had attempted to induce von Kahr to support the putsch. The Bavarian politician equivocated and while Ludendorff and Hitler were on stage von Kahr, von Lossow and von Seisser escaped from their SA guards. They informed Berlin of the attempted coup and General Hans von Seeckt, commanding the Reichswehr, pledged he would smash the rebellion if it was beyond the ability of the Bavarian authorities.

Hitler sensed that the putsch had failed but Ludendorff insisted that there could be no retreat.

The following day at about noon between two and three thousand men from the Kampfbund (Combat Association), the league of Bavarian rightist groups that included Nazi



party members, the Oberland League and Ernst Röhm's *Reichskriegsflagge* or 'Reich War Flag' formed up, with Hitler, Ludendorff, Goering and Julius Streicher at their head. Among the crowd were men like Dietrich and Hess, who would rise to prominence after 1933. As they marched towards Odeonplatz in the centre of Munich, State police attempted to block their way but were pushed aside. At the *Feldherrnhalle* a line of 100 police blocked the road. Hitler called on them to surrender. A shot was fired and then in a flurry of fire 16 Nazis and three policemen were dead. While most observers blamed the outnumbered police for opening fire, the marchers were armed and some claimed that Julius Streicher started it.

FELDHERRNHALLE MASSACRE

Hitler was uninjured. He may have dived for cover or was been pulled to the ground by Scheubner-Richter, as the 39 year old engineer died with his arm linked with that of the future Führer. Whatever the truth, Hitler suffered a dislocated shoulder. Ludendorff first took cover, and then walked straight ahead through the ranks of the police who stood respectfully aside.

Goering was wounded in the leg and groin and his treatment for these injuries and recurrent arthritis made him a morphia addict.

Hitler escaped by car and was hidden in the house of the socialite Ernst 'Putzi' Hanfstaengl at Uffing. Two days later he was arrested. Hanfstaengl had loaned Hitler money and introduced him to a moneyed social circle in Munich.

During the Putsch Ernst Röhm led his *Reichskriegsflagge* group to capture General von Lossow, who had escaped, but via a courier the General ordered Röhm to dismiss his men and the serving Captain complied. For his part in the Putsch Röhm was jailed but almost immediately released on probation.

The trial for high treason of the leaders of the 1923 Munich Beer Hall Putsch began on 24 February 1924. It attracted worldwide attention with over 100 reporters covering a trial that included among the defendants General Ludendorff. It gave Hitler his first audience outside Bavaria and his speeches at the trial were powerful oratory.

HITLER ON TRIAL

The chief witnesses for the prosecution were Gustav Ritter von Kahr the General State Commissioner of Bavaria, Gen Otto von Lossow, commander of the German forces in Bavaria and Col Hans von Seisser Chief of the Bavarian State Police.

Hitler asserted that these men should be in the dock alongside the defendants.



The verdict was handed down on 1 April 1924. Ludendorff was found not guilty and though the maximum sentence for high treason was life imprisonment, Hitler was sentenced to five years in the comfortable fortress prison of Landsberg. The lawyer Franz Gürtner (1881 – 1941) managed to have Hitler released early from Landsberg.

Von Kahr was mistrusted and hated for his role in the Putsch and forced to resign from his post in February 1924. On 6 June 1934, aged 71, he was murdered in the Blood Purge and his body was hacked into pieces and thrown into a swamp near Dachau.

Von Seisser retired from the Bavarian State Police in 1930. He was harassed by the Nazis between 1933 and 1945 and reinstated briefly as police chief by the US Military Government in 1945. He died of natural causes in 1973.

Von Lossow retired from active duty in February 1924 and went to Turkey as a military advisor where he rose to the rank of General. He returned to Germany in the 1930s and the Army protected him from the Nazis. He died of natural causes in 1938.

It was in prison that Hitler began *Mein Kampf* the book explaining his political philosophy, he dedicated it to the martyrs of the Munich Putsch. With time to reflect he realised that the way to power was not through the barrel of a gun but by the ballot box.



Above: With the Braunes Haus as backdrop, Hitler comforts a 9 November 1923 widow. The date was enshrined in the Nazi calendar as a day of national mourning, both for the fallen in the Putsch and the German dead of WW I.

Top: Hitler, having been indicted for treason against the state, received a remarkably lenient 18 months sentence. He is seen here in a photo by Heinrich Hoffmann taken after his release on 20 December 1924. The day was bitterly cold and the Führer was not suitably attired.

INSIDE THE THIRD REICH



PROPAGANDA

SELLING THE NAZI LIE

Hitler's favourite director on the set of her masterly film of the 1934 Nazi rally at Nuremberg. The Führer used Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph des Willens* to enhance his image as a god-like leader of the German people – and incidentally to spread the Nazi message abroad.



Adolf Hitler's continued hold on power was achieved through the manipulation of the German people and the threat of terror. His eminence grise was Dr Joseph Goebbels, a master at appealing to humanity's basest prejudices.

PROPAGANDA, the use of publicity and information services to spread instructions, doctrine or practices, has often been seen as the tool of the 20th century dictatorships in Russia and Germany. As such the word has now taken on unacceptable overtones. However, propaganda has a much older history and is allied in many respects to psychological warfare.

The word 'propaganda' first came into use in 1662 with the establishment of the Roman Catholic Church's Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. In the 20th Century two types of propaganda were defined – 'white' which deals with truth and aims at enlightening, and 'black' which uses lies to confuse and deceive.

The Nazis used both black and white propaganda. In the early days of the movement the party used the simple but effective publicity tools of the spoken word and printed posters or leaflets.

SMALL DARK AGITATOR

The driving force behind Nazi propaganda was the physically unattractive, small, dark and slightly disabled Dr Paul Joseph Goebbels (1897-1945). Goebbels, who had been rejected by the Army in World War I because he had a crippled foot, had studied American journalism and advertising techniques before being drawn to nascent Nazi Party. He later used many of these techniques when he was made

*Reichsminister für Volks-
erklärung und Propaganda* or
Reich Minister for Public
Enlightenment and Propaganda.

Goebbels' big opportunity came when at the age of 27 he was hired by Gregor Strasser to edit *Nationalsozialistische-Briefe* or 'NS Letters', a fortnightly newsletter intended to keep Nazi officials informed about the proper party line.

Goebbels saw his model for building up a total environment of Nazism as the Catholic Church. He found it particularly impressive that, "every Catholic priest in the whole world reads the same prayers on the same day, even at the same hour, in the same Latin language, from the same breviary."

The concept of a single authority which the Church represented, wherein faith and morals were clearly laid down and made obligatory upon all believers also seemed to him something to be envied and emulated. When he looked deeply into the Church's festivals, its processions and its liturgy, he at once saw their value as a means of building up habits of unquestioning obedience. In their secularised form, they must be adopted by the Party and State, he believed.

For Goebbels, the end justified the means. Any propaganda was good propaganda if it was effective, even if to unbiased observers it was questionable or even mendacious. Goebbels also had a mellow, resonant voice that he used effectively in broadcasts and at rallies.



Above: The high quality bi-monthly *Signal* was published in Paris in several European languages, including German, French and English. Many people in the occupied countries made their first contact with National Socialist ideology in its pages.

Below: Hitler sought to awe not only his own people, but foreign opponents as well. Displays such as this massed formation of the puny Panzer I helped to exaggerate the strength of German rearmament.





Above: An election rally in 1932 in Stuttgart. More than a simple Nazi rally or an exhibition of rabble-rousing oratory, it was a complete theatrical experience. It was stage-managed, produced and presented with the aim of creating a deep emotional response in the audience.

Below: Ideas were not strong in Nazi ideology; Speer said of Hitler that he had the pornographer's instinct for the base. Hitler had an uncanny ability to gauge what his audiences wanted to hear, and gave it to them.



Long before the TV 'sound bite' had been invented, he had mastered the short, powerful slogan. These phrases could be shouted, painted on walls and shop fronts or printed on posters or leaflets. The more memorable included "Die Juden sind unser Unglück" – The Jews are our misfortune; "Judas-Jude" – Judas-Jew; "Blut und Boden" – Blood and Soil; "Volk ohne Raum" – People without Space; "Heiliger Grund und Boden" – Holy Ground and Soil;

"Not-, Brot-, und Schicksals-gemeinschaft" – Community of Need, Bread and Fate. This last combined the ideas of bread – representing the biological and material world – need and fate – representing a secularised religion.

PARTY DAYS

When the Nazis came to power they instituted *Gleichschaltung*, or "Co-ordination of the Political Will" which was first mooted by Hitler in March 1933. By the end

of the year new state and social institutions under Nazi control had been introduced. Goebbels was now able to direct the whole apparatus of information and entertainment to further Nazi aims and ideals. The state apparatus used film, radio, books, newspapers and magazines as well as the powerful public spectacle of mass rallies.

The *Parteitage* or Party Days began with two parades in January and August 1923. The third took place in July 1926. They grew in 1927 and 1928 and in 1933 a massive event celebrated Hitler's coming to power. The 1934 Rally was the subject of Leni Riefenstahl's film *Triumph des Willens* or 'Triumph of the Will'. The film was one of the most powerful propaganda successes of the Nazi era, though it was not made under the aegis of Dr Goebbels. Riefenstahl followed with a film covering the Olympiad XI, the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games. This internationally acclaimed film celebrated the stable, confident community that had staged the Olympiad.

PROPAGANDA GAMES

The Government had spent over £15 million building nine arenas including a magnificent stadium. For the new German government the outcome of the games was a success – they won the largest number of medals.

At the 1935 Rally Hitler published the Nuremberg Laws. Rallies followed in 1936, 1937 and Hitler used the 1938 Rally to heighten world tension during the Munich crisis.

Perhaps one of the most cynical examples of what might now be called 'Spin Doctoring' at rallies was *NS-Jubel Dritte Stufe* or NS Jubilation Third Stage. This was the stage-managed peak-volume applause. A decibel value was assigned for the volume and coloured lights gave the audience the cue for the proper amount of jubilation. In news reels of the period the audience appear to react spontaneously as they stand with

arms raised bellowing *Sieg Heil!*

Before the war propaganda was aimed at nation building and defining racial identity. One of the more unusual campaigns was directed against smoking, which was described as "poison for the Aryan race".

In the drive for political power the Nazis attacked the Weimar Republic for their acceptance of the *Kriegsschuldfrage* – the War Guilt Lie or Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles. This placed the responsibility for causing all the loss and damage of World War solely onto Germany. Communists, Social Democrats and Jews were also targets for hostile propaganda.

WARTIME PROPAGANDA

When war was declared the Germans had two aims, to sustain morale and to attack their enemies. To this end radio, the press, theatre, cinema, posters and loudspeaker vans bombarded the German nation with the party line. For the Germans the years from 1939 to the winter of 1941 were a propaganda bonanza. They were victorious on all fronts. *Signal*, the stylish German news magazine that modelled itself on 'Picture Post' and 'Life. Magazine' was published in twenty languages. It celebrated German victories with lavish use of colour photography. The name had been chosen because it was a word that was universal throughout Europe.

After 1943 *Signal* presented a version of Nazi Germany that was increasingly at variance with the reality of a country suffering shortages and under constant air attack. The Germany shown in *Signal* was a land untroubled by war, where the harvest was gathered in, artists and craftsmen thrived and the war was at a safe distance.

PARTY PRESS

The broadsheet *Völkischer Beobachter* had been in existence as a National Socialist newspaper since December 1920. After 1933 it would become the official organ of the Nazi Party.



Right: 'Baron Münchhausen' premiered on 5 March 1943. It was lauded for its portrayal of Völkisch values. Hans Albers played the aristocratic liar who claimed to have ridden a cannon-ball and flown to the moon on a balloon. The lavish colour production marked the 25th anniversary of the film company UFA.

Left: One film maker who could afford to ignore Goebbels was Leni Riefenstahl, who had an even more powerful patron in Adolf Hitler. This did not stop him doing his utmost to thwart and disparage her.



Film and the Third Reich

ALTHOUGH 1363 films were made under the Nazis only 208 were banned by the Allies on account of ideological content. This was for two reasons: firstly because the ideology of National Socialism, unlike Communism or Christianity, could not be readily woven into the fabric of life. Secondly, the shrewd Propaganda Minister knew that an uninterrupted diet of propaganda would soon tire the public. He used entertainment to fill the cinemas so that when he had an important message to convey the audience was there.

Goebbels longed to get his hands on the film industry. He saw it as an ideal medium for persuasion. He chafed when he saw it representing 'negative' ideas before 1933, as in Erich Remarque's *All Quiet On the Western Front*. To disrupt its premiere Goebbels had Storm Troopers release white mice and

snakes among the audience.

Furthermore, Goebbels was film struck. He loved the milieu and was at his happiest with film people. Most of his many liaisons were with film stars – it took a direct order from Hitler to end his affair with actress Lida Baarova.

As with all other artistic media the industry was bought under the control of the relevant Reich Chamber. The Film Department became responsible for every aspect of the business, from matters of policy down to the employment of usherettes in individual cinemas.

The strict controls led inevitably to a flight of talent abroad, Marlene Dietrich and Fritz Lang being prominent emigrants. The majority however, swallowed their pride and simply did what they were told to do.



*Left: Goebbels attends the opening night of the anti-Semitic film *Jud Süß* on 25 September 1940. The production was plagued with difficulties, primarily because crew and actors alike were unwilling to be associated with such rabidly detestable subject matter.*

*Right: Veit Harlan was the director of *Jud Süß*. He claimed that Goebbels coerced him into the job, but he went on to become the star Nazi director. His later films included *Der Grosse König* (1940) and the morale-building *Kolberg* (1945). After the war he was cleared by a denazification court, but his films remained highly conservative.*





Above: The Party's top propagandists meet German Youth at the Obersalzberg. The over-sexed congenital liar Goebbels was unpopular with many party comrades, partly because he condescendingly referred to them as philistines but mostly because he could keep Hitler roaring with laughter at his impersonations of them.

Left: The Nuremberg Rallies meant that the city rivalled Munich as the heart of Nazism. Here, SA Stormtroopers cross the Fleischbrücke en route to marching past the Führer.

Below: The torchlight parade through Berlin's Brandenburg Gate on 30 January 1933 celebrated Hitler's appointment to the Chancellorship.



The *Illustrierter Beobachter* was a more downmarket picture magazine, but it was much more popular than the *Beobachter*. At the bottom of the publishing heap was Julius Streicher's *Der Stürmer*, the scatological and obscene anti-Semitic tabloid that was aimed at the most ignorant and prejudiced elements of the German population.

WAR CORRESPONDANTS

At the beginning of the war, the men of the *Propaganda-Kompagnien* – PK, or Propaganda Companies – swung into action. Before the war started Goebbels' Ministry had compiled a list of reporters, photographers and cameramen suited to the role as

war correspondents. They attended an eight-week training course covering war reporting techniques and military skills. They were described by Goebbels as "cold-blooded and fearless" and newsreel film footage shot by PK cameramen was evidence of their courage as it took German audiences into the front line.

As the war progressed the newsreel cameramen came into their own. Not only did they produce material for the weekly *Wochenschau*, but they also filmed full length war documentaries such as *Feuertaufe* (Baptism of Fire) showing the 18 day Polish campaign, and *Sieg im Westen* (Victory in the West) about the

Blitzkrieg in Belgium, Holland and France in 1940.

From this time on Goebbels seldom failed to comment on the weekly newsreel in his diaries, and with his notes on the subject attached short summaries of the reports on the morale of the people collected by the Gestapo and SD.

ANTI-JEWISH CINEMA

Cinema had long been used by the Nazis to promote their anti-Semitic views in films like *Jud Süß* and *Der Ewige Jude* – The Eternal Jew, but it was also a psychological tool – *Der Ewige Jude* was shown to men of the *Einsatzgruppen* who were about to embark on their campaign of mass slaughter in Russia.

Heroic historical themes were also covered, the most extravagant being the film *Kolberg* that was started on the express instruction of Dr Goebbels in 1943. It was intended to be a morale booster and was based on an incident in the Napoleonic Wars when a small Prussian town defended itself against the French Army. The film cost RM 8.5 million and involved thousands of front-line soldiers withdrawn from the Eastern Front as extras, as well as 6,000 horses, tons of blank ammunition and the use of 100 railway trucks to transport salt to simulate snow.

The premiere was on 30 January 1945 at the *Atlantikfest* at La Rochelle, the

Goebbels' Empire

Department of Film

The task of the Main Office for Film was the regular organisation of film shows suitable for popular enlightenment and education, so as to contribute to "deepening the National Socialist world view."

The Department was divided into offices controlling:

1. Book-keeping
2. Production and Equipment
3. Dramaturgy
4. Press
5. Slide Shows

Department of Culture

This Department was responsible for encouraging and supervising cultural endeavours dedicated to the spirit of Nazism. Its main offices were:

1. Architecture
2. Artistic Policy
3. Selection
4. Programming

Included in the Department's brief was a duty to engage in "the battle against kitsch and the prevention of mystic and pseudo-religious perversion of the world view through the work of cranks".

Department of Radio

The Radio Department was split into three offices:

1. Cultural Radio and Radio Organisation
2. Radio Technology – concerned with technical systems, training, short wave and amateur radio and education
3. Radio Propaganda – responsibilities included listener recruitment, the Press Office and Political broadcasts

REICHSPROPAGANDA-LEITUNG (RPL)

Department of Active Propaganda

This Department had an extraordinary range of responsibilities from organising Mass rallies to the conduct of membership meetings at the local level. It organised the entire speaker system of the Party. It produced and distributed the appropriate posters and leaflets and examined the meeting reports from the speakers and propaganda offices. Its two main offices were:

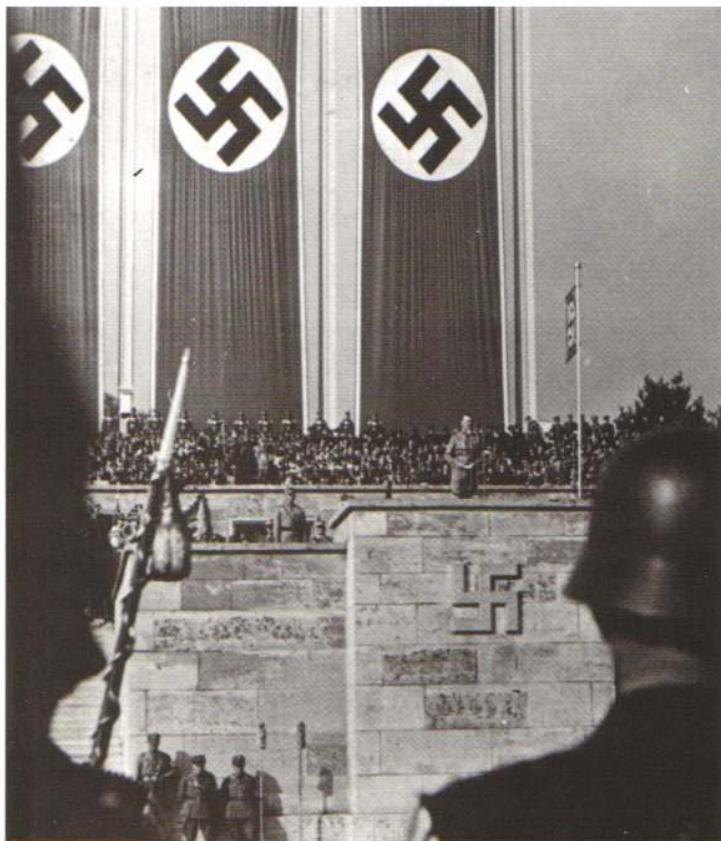
1. Speaker System
2. Major Events

Department of Co-ordination

Responsible for keeping all government offices informed of propaganda guidelines, so that everyone in the Party was singing from the same hymn sheet. Its offices were:

1. Staff
2. Business
3. Press Propaganda
4. Exhibitions and Trade Fairs

The Press Office was responsible for securing maximum publicity for events both in the Home and Foreign Press.



Above: By 1938 the Nuremberg rallies had become beautifully crafted and tightly orchestrated propaganda events. As with modern party political conferences, these tribal gatherings were about showing a united front and displaying loyalty to the leader.

Below: A scene from the filming of *Hitlerjunge Quex* (1933). The Nazis soon learnt, owing to the dismal unpopularity of this film, wholly produced by Goebbels' Ministry, that propaganda films needed a more subtle approach.



French naval base still held by the Germans, but completely surrounded and hundreds of kilometres behind the lines. The film print was flown in at night and parachuted into the city.

"GERMANY CALLING"

The attack on the USSR in 1941 marked the beginning of the *Sondermeldungen* or radio broadcasts of victories. At Hitler's request these special announcements were preceded by the rolling drums and fanfare from the opening to Liszt's *Preludes*.

For their broadcast propaganda operations against the enemy, the Germans found some unusual allies. To British listeners, particularly during the grim months after the fall of France in 1940, one voice particularly represented the German enemy.

William Joyce (1906-1946) was an Anglo-American whose broadcasts always opened with the phrase "Germany Calling, Germany Calling". His sneering upper class tones earned him the nickname of "Lord Haw-Haw". His work mocked the British war effort, but were not taken seriously. Born in the USA he had lived most of his life in Ireland and Britain and held a British passport. He joined the British Union of Fascists in 1933 and in 1939 moved to Germany. He was captured by British troops on 28 May 1945. Tried at the Old Bailey for treason he was sentenced to death and hanged in London on 3 January 1946.

AXIS SALLY

Once America had entered the war another, rather more entertaining voice could be heard. American Mildred Gillars (1901-1988), known to US soldiers as 'Axis Sally', went to Germany in the 1920s as a music student. Allied troops fighting in Italy enjoyed her taste in jazz and popular music but found her propaganda rather amusing. She was arrested in 1945 and served 12 years in a Federal prison.

Goebbels was a powerful

orator and after the disaster at Stalingrad worked hard to rebuild national morale. He mobilised the press and radio to unite the nation in martial grief. "The whole of German propaganda must create a myth out of the heroism of Stalingrad" he explained. It was to become "one of the most treasured possessions in German history". On 18 February 1943 at the Berlin *Sportpalast* Goebbels faced a mass rally with the theme *Totaler Krieg – Kürzester Krieg*. Like a Greek chorus the audience responded to his demand "Do you want total war?" "Yes" came the roared response. "Are you determined to follow the Führer and fight for victory whatever the cost?" "Yes" they bellowed back.

Echoing the great call to the Prussians in 1812 his resonating voice boomed out over the loudspeakers "Let our war cry be: Now the People Rise Up and the Storm Break Loose".

EMPTY PROMISES

Goebbels may have challenged the Germans to make new sacrifices, but he also promised them that new wonder weapons like the V-1 and V-2 would bring the war to a satisfactory conclusion. His propaganda portrayed the Western Allies as terror bombers, while the enemy in the east was a ravaging horde of Bolsheviks intent on rapine.

As the Red Army and the western Allies advanced into Germany in the spring of 1945, they found walls painted with slogans still proclaiming belief in ultimate victory. On the wall of a ruined building in the western fringes of Germany huge whitewashed letters demanded of their readers "*Was hast Du heute für Deutschland getan?*" – What have you done for Germany today?

Goebbels the Nazi's propaganda master remained passionately loyal to Hitler to the end. He moved his wife and family into the *Führerbunker* in Berlin in 1945. In the end, after Hitler's death, he poisoned his family and committed suicide with his wife.



Above: The artists often employed violent images. This was consistent with Hitler's beliefs that brutality and physical strength were the two things that all men respected. "Haven't you ever seen a crowd collecting to watch a street brawl?" he once asked.



Above: Posters were of course employed for purely commercial projects. Those promoting propaganda films were supposed to do more than just draw in audiences. They were supposed to contribute to an overall propaganda offensive. Thus the posters for the violently anti-Semitic film *Jud Süß* reinforced the image of the rapacious Jew of Nazi stereotypes.



Above: This poster produced in 1933 for the last ostensibly free elections in Germany, tells voters that the whole people has but one mind.

Nazi Poster Art

THE NAZI POSTER was a crucial element in creating the National Socialist spirit within Germany. It was part of the total visual effort of persuasion and intimidation at which the Nazis were so skilled.

Every message in a poster was to be confined to the barest necessities, expressed in stereotypical formulas, so frequently repeated that their underlying idea was imprinted on the memory. Hitler wanted to appeal not to the educated but to the 'broad masses'. For such a campaign, posters were an ideal medium. They were difficult to escape if there were enough of them. Wherever a man would move he would encounter them, like the ever-present face of Big Brother in George Orwell's 1984.

The posters became models of their art, using advertising techniques far ahead of their time. They invariably carried a single message concept, reinforced by drawings and graphics that were simple, straightforward and bold.

Expressing themselves as the Nazis invariably did, in terms of struggle and warfare, the messages screaming from the walls were always uncompromising. "Perish Judah!", "Join our Struggle", "One People, One State, One Leader", and, desperately during the war, as the cataclysm broke above them – "Victory will be Ours" and "Fight on to Victory!"

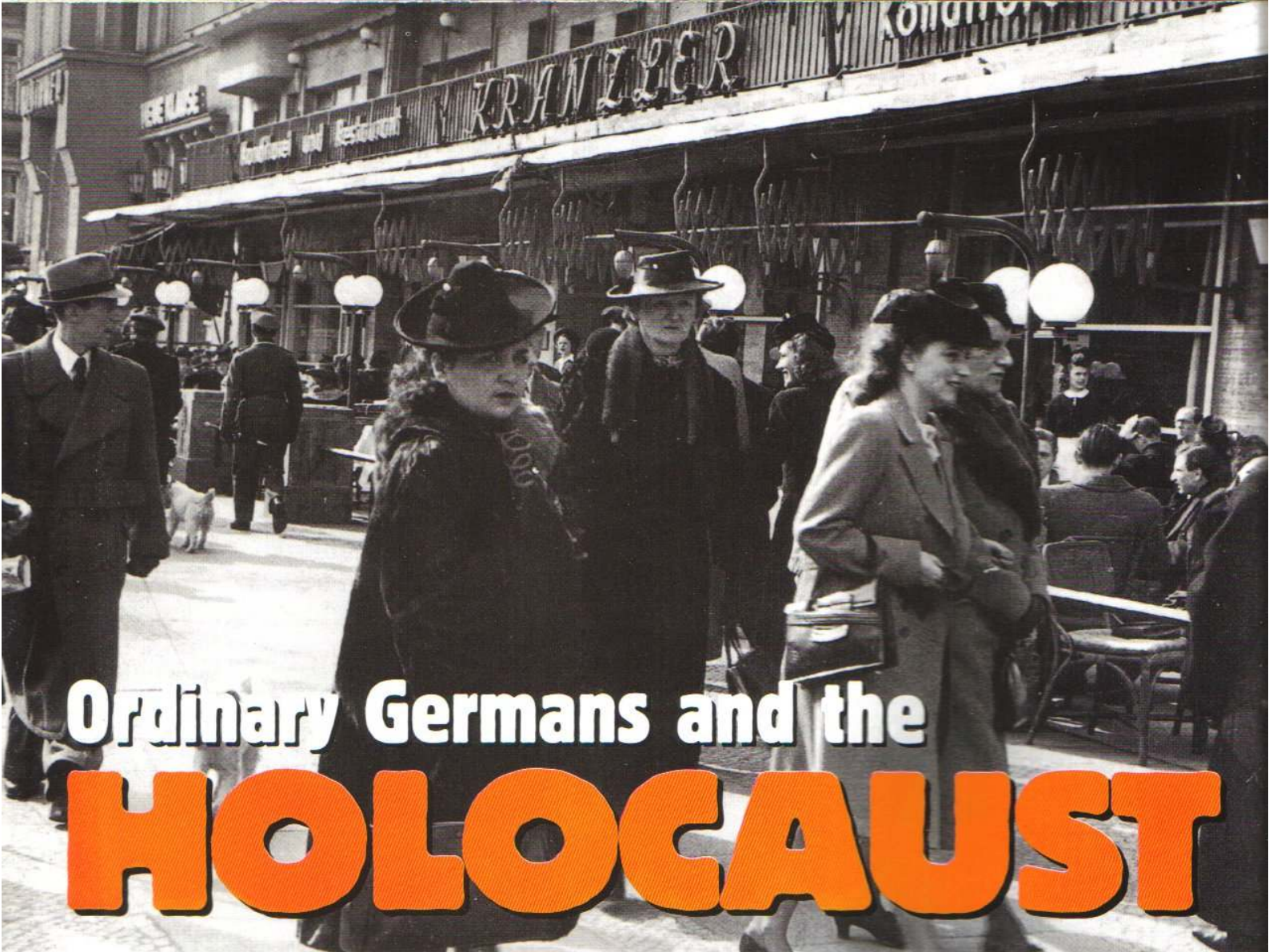
Left: In March 1938 Hitler sought to prompt the German nation into endorsing the annexation of Austria. This poster's message is based on the Nazi view of race as the determining factor in drawing a nation's borders. The Nazi message was simple: Germany would only be whole again when all its people were contained within one country, led by one supreme leader.



Right: For Hitler the perfect combination of colours was the triad of white, red and black that from the outset made up the Swastika. The red evoked the brilliance of new-spilt blood, the white purity and the black the struggle from which Germany had emerged. Posted against neutral backgrounds the images had an extraordinary impact.

Left: Once the Nazis siezed power, the poster was there no longer to question and attack but to reinforce the message and instill conformity. Even as the Reich was torn apart, the old liturgy was churned out. An army of young boys and old men were called to arms to fight for German liberty and life. Many continued to believe the old lies.





Ordinary Germans and the **HOLOCAUST**

Himmler and his myrmidons were the executors of the 'Final Solution' to the Jewish problem, but how much did ordinary Germans know? How much of the responsibility for the Holocaust did they share?

*The German people knew full well the oppression that Jews and other 'untermensch' suffered – the activities of the SA and the SS were no secret. Indeed, many supported the anti-Semitic laws promulgated at Nuremberg. But could they know what **really** happened in the camps? And did they know about the Holocaust?*

STALIN WANTED to blame the German officer corps for the evils of Nazism. He suggested to President Roosevelt that when the Allied armies crushed Germany, they shoot 50,000 German officers and have done with it. Roosevelt laughed, but Prime Minister Winston Churchill stormed out of the room: the wartime Allies never did agree a coherent policy on war crimes.

The senior Soviet judge at Nuremberg had presided over enough rigged 'show trials' of dissident communists to give

credence to Hermann Goering's objections – this was the victors judging the vanquished, nothing more. However, the Nuremberg trials did formalise a notion that underpinned Allied policy in occupied Germany during 1945.

The American government's initial plan was to treat all German officials as Nazis, to arrest them and investigate their role in crimes against humanity. But this was quietly abandoned. As the Allies took over Germany, they had to assume responsibility for civil administration – the water supply, coal, food rations – for which local knowledge was essential. Many officials were retained in

their old jobs, only now they were working for the Allies.

Some people were targeted for special treatment. Officers in the German armed forces and senior Nazi Party officials were arrested, as were senior men from the SD and SS. At Nuremberg the SS was branded a 'criminal organisation' and the distinction became official: 'ordinary' Germans could be treated like any other beaten enemy – the SS would take the blame.

FACING THE TRUTH

The shock of ordinary Germans, forced to tour nearby concentration camps by Allied

soldiers in 1945 was captured on film. Surely, they could not have known? The scale of the Holocaust defied belief: audiences around the world were stunned to silence by the newsreels from Auschwitz. It seemed easier, for humanity's sake, to believe this was the work of an evil regime, conducted in secret away from its own people.

At his trial, Albert Speer's defence of 'I could have known, I should have known – but I did not know' seemed plausible. It established the idea that even among the higher echelons of the Nazi regime, full awareness of Hitler's evil deeds – knowledge



Above: Soldiers manning a street checkpoint examine the papers of Star of David-wearing Jews. Such scenes were a familiar daily occurrence both in the Reich and in the occupied lands.

Right: German railway workers and officials organised the transports of Jews and others to the East. They had to know about the terrible conditions aboard the trains, and yet did nothing. That may have been self-preservation, since to protest would have meant a one-way ticket to a concentration camp.

that amounted to complicity – was restricted to his most notorious henchmen.

Efforts were soon underway to narrow the circle of guilt further. Respected commanders of the Waffen SS like Paul Hausser and 'Panzer' Meyer argued that the Waffen SS was quite distinct from the *Totenkopfverbände*, the concentration camp guards. They claimed to be 'pure' front line soldiers, for whom Nazi indoctrination was an irritating diversion from proper training.

The full extent of the Nazis' crimes was certainly known to Hitler and his inner circle: Bormann, Himmler, Heydrich,





Above: Prisoners in a camp workshop. The SS created a vast industrial organisation to exploit cheap camp labour. Ordinary Germans benefited from the products, but since the SS industries were usually located in the camps they rarely knew of the misery which went into their making.



Above: Warsaw's Jews are rounded up to be sent to Treblinka. The SS sited the ghettos and death camps on Polish territory, but news of the horrors being perpetrated filtered back to the Reich via engineers in slave labour factories and railway personnel who transported the Jews.

Below: Soviet POWs who have survived years of captivity line up for rations after liberation. Over a million Soviet prisoners were sent back to Germany, where they were used as slaves.



and the attendees at the Wansee conference. The decision to undertake the slaughter of European Jews in the extermination camps of *Aktion Reinhard* was to be kept secret, just like the mass shootings in Poland and Russia during 1941. The killings orchestrated by the *Einsatzkommandos* also involved considerable numbers of locally-recruited auxiliaries from the Baltic States and the Ukraine as well as whole battalions of *Ordnungspolizei* – German police reservists. The orders were given verbally, very little was put into writing, and officials admonished when they forgot to employ the euphemisms favoured by Himmler, 're-settlement' or 'evacuation'.

WHO ELSE KNEW?

Army units could not help learning about the killings, often dressed up as anti-partisan operations. Some battalions sent detachments to assist and a minority of ordinary soldiers developed a grisly form of recreation: 'execution tourism', volunteering their services and photographing the killings. They were ordered to desist.

Before suggesting who knew about the Holocaust, it is worth remembering why the extermination camps were built in the first place. Established from late 1941 to summer 1942, the *Aktion Reinhard* killing centres were deliberately built out of sight, in occupied Poland where security could be enforced with lethal ease. Local Poles were warned not to breathe a word of what went on.

Gas chambers and purpose-built crematoria were used to put people to death by the million – yet this industrialisation of mass murder was not required for reasons of 'efficiency'. The ethnic violence in Rwanda during the mid-1990s escalated until, at its peak, over 250,000 people were being killed per month – a faster rate of murder than that achieved at Treblinka or Auschwitz-Birkenau. And this was accomplished with knives

and axes.

The machinery of the Nazi Holocaust was inspired by Himmler's search for a method of execution that weighed less heavily on the souls of his men than the very personal business of mass shooting. He received enough reports of alcoholism and arbitrary violence that accompanied the men of the *Einsatzkommandos* on their descent into the moral abyss. In his warped world, he was proud of his SS men for what he regarded as the maintenance of 'civilised standards' while they committed acts of wholesale slaughter – mainly of women and children. Had every German been a 'willing executioner', the gas chambers would never have been required.

The central act of the Holocaust took place in a remote area of the German empire and the use of machinery minimised the number of personnel required. The evidence was systematically destroyed when the camps had done their work: Paul Blobel's *Sonderkommando* 1005 was ordered to disinter and burn the bodies left by the 1941 shootings before the Russian front recoiled westwards, threatening to expose the extermination camps.

INVOLVED IN GENOCIDE

In spite of the best efforts at concealment, many 'ordinary' Germans knew about the Holocaust not through rumour, but because they were involved, peripherally, in its administration. The transport of more than six million people across Europe involved thousands of civilian railway personnel.

The camps ordered their specialist equipment from civilian engineering companies and put them out to some degree of competitive tender. The true purpose of the gas chambers, crematoria, gurneys for the bodies, gratings for the fires, fire bricks and all the other hideous equipment was not disguised. Progressive improvements were made to crematoria to enable

CONCENTRATION CAMPS



Above: Some of the first concentration camp inmates labour in the garden at Dachau. They are guarded by an armed SA Stormtrooper, which indicates that the photo was taken soon after the Nazis came to power. Before long, the camps would be under the control of the Totenkopfverbänden of the SS.



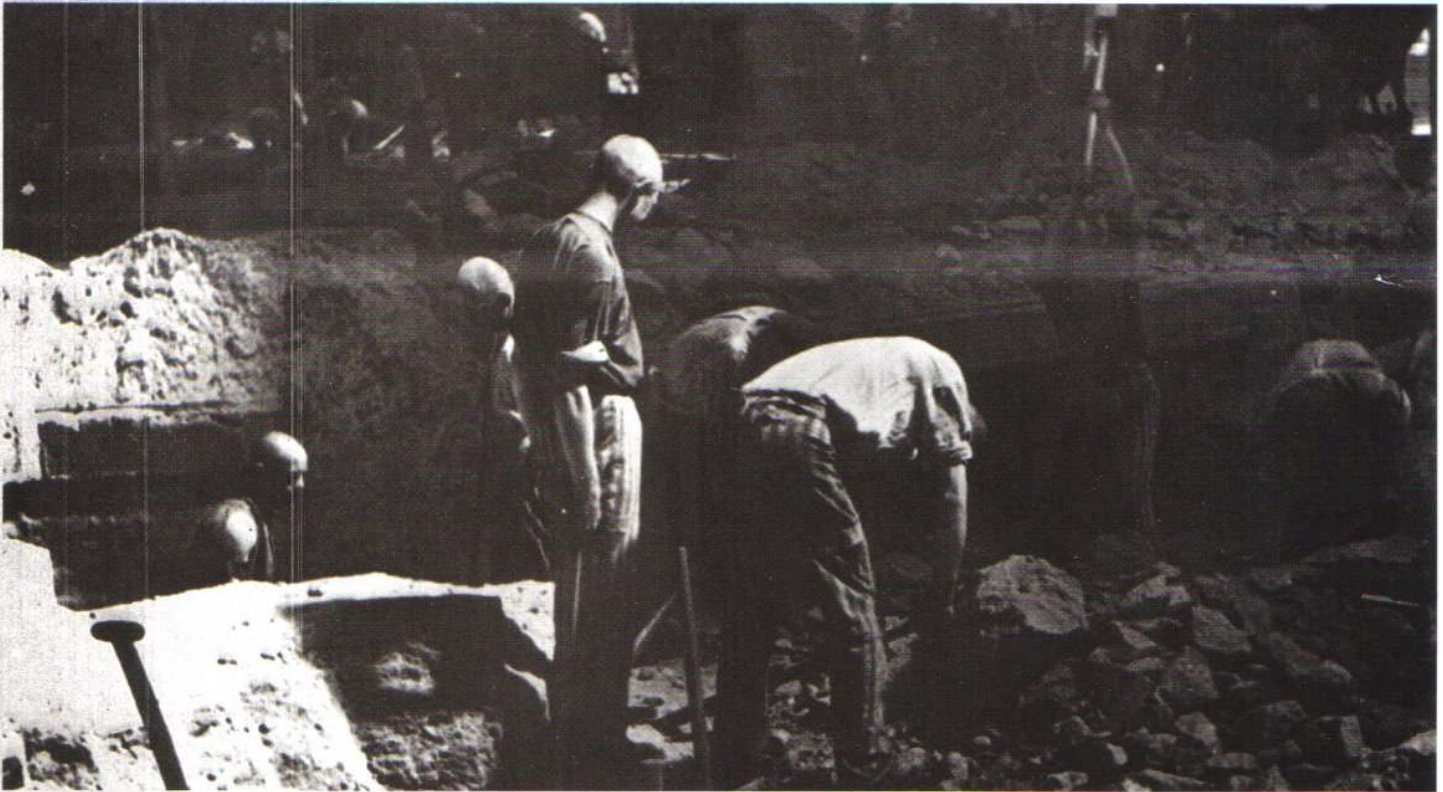
Above left: Prisoners from Dachau work at building an embankment to the north of Munich. The houses in the background show how ordinary Germans were often close neighbours of the camp system.



Left: In the early days, most labour in concentration camps was of the manual variety, and was performed less for economic reasons and more as a punishment for inmates. Since law-abiding Germans were told that the concentration camps held mainly criminals, there were few objections to the harsh regime.

Below: War saw an explosive growth in the system, but the biggest camps, such as Auschwitz, were deliberately sited in Poland far from the public eye.





Above: Concentration camp inmates dig the foundations of a factory. Germany did not put her economy onto a true war footing until about 1942, but after that the hundreds of thousands of camp inmates became a valuable and widely-used resource.



Left: A German police unit rounds up Dutch Jews for transportation to the east. Although police, SS and SD units were mainly responsible for the mechanics of the Holocaust, they were often given assistance by regular army and Waffen SS troops.

them to burn at higher temperatures for longer, and to avoid the fires getting clogged with unburned fat.

Groups of unremarkable, desk-bound bureaucrats sat and made these decisions. The steel and glass spyhole on the gas chamber at Majdanek was stamped, 'Auert, Berlin'. It had

been manufactured by men who took pride in their work.

ARMY CRIMES

Although some elements of the German army did participate in the mass murder of Jews in Russia during the early stages of the invasion, the Wehrmacht was not directly involved in the

implementation of the Final Solution. Even so, the German army has a murky record in anti-partisan operations in Russia: high body counts allied to pitifully small trawls of captured weapons suggest that there were outright massacres. But the war in Russia was conducted with great cruelty by both sides, a

vicious cycle of violence beginning with the murder of prisoners in the summer of 1941.

For the Waffen-SS to plead innocence of the Final Solution is less believable. The evidence is unequivocal – personnel were frequently and freely exchanged between the SS-VT (armed SS) and SS-TV (concentration camp staff) before the war. This interchange continued during the conflict. The founder of the *Totenkopfverbände*, Theodor Eicke, drew his infamous 3rd SS Division directly from SS-TV personnel. Waffen-SS officers invalided out of frontline service were posted back to the concentration camps. Officers

SLAVE LABOUR



Above and left: Large numbers of Soviet prisoners and forced labourers from Eastern Europe were used on the land, freeing up German manpower for the battlefield. Some were reasonably well treated, but most were worked until they dropped.



Above: 'Volunteers' from Eastern Europe work in a Wehrmacht maintenance shop, reconditioning lorry parts. Originally the Germans asked for volunteer workers. By 1942, however, they were simply rounding up people of the right age and shipping them off to work in factories, releasing able-bodied men for the armed services.



Above: Female forced labourers work in an ammunition factory. Ostensibly volunteers from the occupied countries, the women had little choice in where they worked. The work is being overseen by soldiers unfit for service at the front.



Above: Dachau inmates labour at the BMW engine plant at Allach, near Munich. Most of Germany's major companies used slave labour, often alongside or under the supervision of regular workers. Usually housed in satellite camps, the slaves were kept in conditions at least as bad as those in the main camps, and many were literally worked to death.



Left: Millions of Soviet prisoners died in camps, but since most of the deaths occurred on Russian soil, the ordinary German had no first-hand evidence of atrocity. Nevertheless, rumours abounded, possibly spread by soldiers returning home on leave.

who incurred Eicke's personal enmity were sent there too (giving the lie to his oft-stated belief that service in the camps was as 'honourable' as frontline combat). SS enlisted men convicted of serious disciplinary offences were sent to the camps as inmates, not guards. This penalty hung over the SS formations until 1942-3, when SS divisions started to form penal companies along the lines of the Soviet ones.

Albert Speer denied that he

knew about the Holocaust, but could not conceal his involvement with the slave labour camps. Late in 1944 he visited the underground factory complex 'Dora' where V2 rockets were assembled. Here, mortality rates soared to the point that some authors claim the deaths of the (mainly Jewish) workers were intentional, an additional purpose of the facility.

SLAVE LABOUR

Speer and a very large number of

Germans did know about the use of slave labour – and the abominable cruelties that this involved. All of the main concentration camps had satellite camps, sometimes quite small affairs. These supplied slave labour to work alongside regular employees at more than 1,000 locations, and were used by all manner of German companies, businesses and organisations.

Part of the reason that Germans disclaimed all knowledge of the holocaust was

that talking about the Holocaust could and did land people in the concentration camps themselves. The Nazi state encouraged children to report their parents to the authorities if they voiced anti-Nazi sentiments. The network of Party officials was open to exploitation by anyone with a grudge: the files of the Gestapo bulge with denunciations of 'anti-social behaviour' that could range from defeatist comments to social or sexual deviation. Even the relatives of serving army officers were not immune: Colonel Hans von Luck spent the summer of 1944 alternately commanding a *Kampfgruppe* of 21st Panzer Division in Normandy and trying to get the half-Jewish father of his fiancée out of the clutches of the Gestapo. He failed.

NO ALLIED REVELATION

The Nazi security apparatus was particularly on the alert for people listening to Allied radio programs. Millions of Germans defied Hitler and listened to the BBC nevertheless. But they did not learn of the Holocaust there.

Allied wartime propaganda avoided emphasising crimes against the Jews. The advice from US correspondents resident in Germany until December 1941 was that anti-Semitic prejudice was so endemic it would be counter-productive to criticise Hitler's anti-Jewish policies.

Most Germans knew something of the horrors perpetrated by the Nazis, but few would admit it, even to themselves. In the crazy world of the Third Reich, it was simply too dangerous to talk about.

Left: British soldiers at Belsen force SS men, local officials and ordinary Germans to face the truth of the Nazi regime. To a man or woman, they claimed to know nothing about the camp even though the stench of thousands of typhus-ridden bodies permeated the air for miles around.



DEPORTATION AND DEATH



Above: Jewish children look from a cattle car as they are sent across Europe. For the moment, these are the lucky ones: at least they have fresh air. But most will be gassed on arrival at Auschwitz.

Left: Jews were told that they were to be 'resettled' in Eastern Europe. Families took what little they could carry when summoned to take the transports east.

Below: The SS tried to hide all evidence of genocide from the outside world. But horror stories leaked, and some Jews had to be forced to move at gunpoint.





Sepp Dietrich takes the Führer's uninjured hand at Hitler's East Prussian HQ the 'Wolfsschanze'. In August 1944 Dietrich was awarded the diamonds to his Knight's Cross for the command of his forces in Normandy.

Sepp Dietrich

MASTER OF HITLER'S GUARD

Joseph 'Sepp' Dietrich was admired by Hitler for his mixture of cunning, ruthlessness and hardness. Far from being an intellectual, he nevertheless rose from being a street thug to command a Panzer Army.

"DECENT, BUT STUPID" said Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt when asked for his opinion of Sepp Dietrich.

SS-Obergruppenführer Felix Steiner recalled "I once spent an hour and a half trying to explain a situation to Sepp Dietrich with the aid of a map. It was quite useless. He understood nothing at all". SS-Obergruppenführer Paul Hausser who commanded the II SS-Panzer-Korps was more damning. "Ordinarily he would make a fair sergeant major, a better sergeant and a first class corporal". Yet for all his lack of higher military education Josef 'Sepp' Dietrich would eventually command the 6th SS Panzer Armee in Germany's final offensive in the West – in the Ardennes in December 1944.

His leadership of the *Leibstandarte-SS "Adolf Hitler"* would stamp the style of the Waffen-SS – at once comradely to those within the formation and ruthless towards enemies in the field. Despite being short, overweight and with the face of a bouncer, he had considerable charisma. As a soldier Hitler said of Dietrich "I have always given him the opportunity to intervene in sore spots. He is a man who is simultaneously cunning, energetic and brutal... And what care he takes of his troops!" Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, who met him in Normandy in 1944, described him as "flashy and uncultured, needing an amanuensis to turn his thoughts into readable German."

APPRENTICE BUTCHER

He was born in Hawangen, near Memmingen on 28 May 1892.

He began his career as a butcher then became a farm labourer and after a stint as a waiter enlisted in the German Imperial Army in 1911. In World War I he rose to the rank of *Oberfeldwebel* – Sergeant Major – and served in the 42nd Infantry Regiment, 5th Storm battalion and 13th Bavarian Tank Detachment. His war service record records his outstanding bravery. He earned both Iron Crosses, the Tank Assault Badge, the Bavarian Service Cross and the Austrian Medal for Bravery.

Like many ex-soldiers the post war years were a period of instability and Dietrich drifted through a variety of jobs including policeman, foreman in a tobacco factory, customs officer and garage attendant. He joined the *Oberland Freikorps* in 1919, and whilst a member took



part in the ill-fated Munich Putsch on 9 November 1923.

In 1928 he joined the National Socialist party (NSDAP No 89015), which appealed to the disaffected and marginalised elements of German society. Hitler, as an ex-Corporal was quick to recognise the contribution a tough ex-sergeant major could make to the party. He was invaluable in the brawling political meetings of the late 20s and was selected as Hitler's driver and bodyguard, receiving the nickname "Chauffeureska" from his boss. His driving skills attracted Auto Union and Daimler-Benz who actually offered to employ him as a driver demonstrator of their cars. Dietrich had joined SS *Sturm I* in 1928 and been assigned the SS number 1177. On 18 November 1929 he was promoted SS-*Standartenführer* and helped to organise the SS in southern Bavaria.

FÜHRER'S BOUNCER

Hitler awarded Dietrich's drive with a post as dispatcher for the publishing house of Franz Eher in Munich. In 1930 his career began to take off when he was elected to the Reichstag as delegate for *Wahlkreis* (Electoral District) Lower Bavaria – however he was no debater and maintained a mute presence.

In 1932 Hitler chose Dietrich to form his personal bodyguard. On 17 March 1933 Dietrich set up the SS-*Stabswache Berlin*, a 117-strong SS honour guard. This was renamed *Leibstandarte-SS Adolf Hitler* in September, and was based at the former Imperial cadet academy at Lichterfelde Barracks in Berlin.

As the SS expanded the LAH became both a Praetorian guard for Hitler, and the spearhead formation of the armed SS – what would become the Waffen-SS. In black uniforms and white belts Leibstandarte members would stand guard outside the Chancellery or meet foreign visitors as a guard of honour.

In 1933 Dietrich was promoted from SS-*Gruppenführer*

Sepp Dietrich was a born soldier and a very tough man. Though less than capable as a general, he led from the front and never dodged a fight. He was a father to his towering SS men, using the familiar 'du' form of address with everyone and winning their trust in a way few unit leaders ever have.



to SS-*Oberst-Gruppenführer* and elected to the Prussian State Council.

The LAH, originally regarded by the army as a slightly ridiculous organisation fit only for parades, would prove fearsome soldiers on all fronts. Its members were imbued by a myth of toughness and courage. They were electrified by the consciousness of being members of an aristocratic elite, a

special collective with its own laws and loyalties. Their first military operation was the entry into the Saarland in March 1935, but Dietrich and the LAH had already played a major part in the Röhm purge.

KEY TO VICTORY

Under Dietrich the LAH fought in Poland, Holland, France, the Balkans and the USSR.

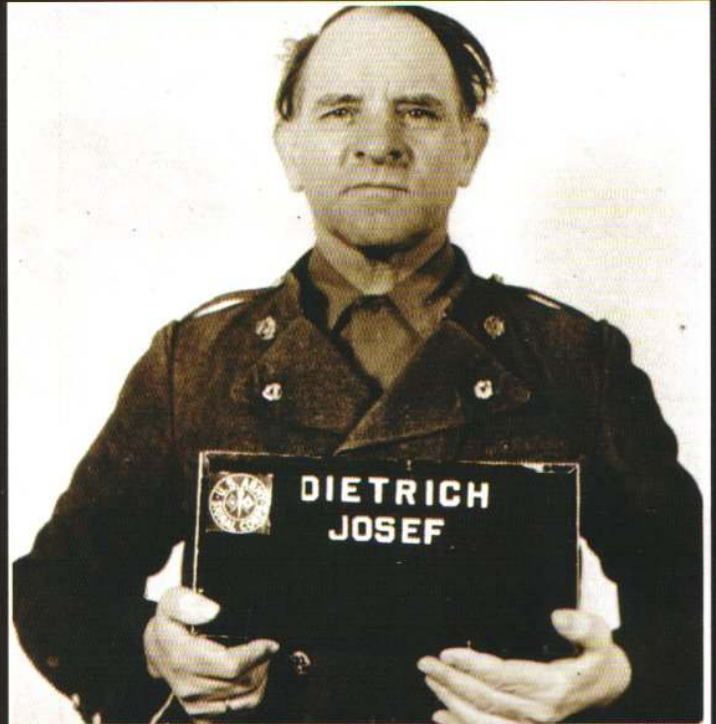
Dietrich always gave respect to worthy combatants, and particularly admired his Greek adversaries in the Balkans. When the Italian High Command asked him to 'lend' them 50,000 Greek soldiers he said scathingly: "If you need 50,000 prisoners why didn't you take them during the fighting?" The Greeks were immediately released with their officers.



Above: Hitler takes a break from his hectic 1932 electioneering program, backed by 'Butcher Boy' Dietrich. An ardent Nazi and one of Hitler's favourites, Dietrich led a bodyguard unit mounted in three powerful Mercedes, its members armed with revolvers and rhino-hide whips.

Above right: Thirteen years later, and Dietrich is a prisoner of the Americans. After a last ditch defence of Vienna, Dietrich retreated to the foothills of the Alps where he surrendered on 8 May 1945.

Below: Dietrich (far left) accompanies the Führer in Königsburg during the final Reichstag election campaign in March 1933. On 17 March he set up the Berlin SS Guard Staff, from which the Leibstandarte would evolve later that year.



In 1941 the LAH, by now a motorised division, adopted a shield enclosing a *dietrich* or skeleton key as its divisional emblem. The key would unlock any door, including that to victory. When Sepp Dietrich received Oakleaves for his Knight's Cross on 31 December 1941 the shield was enclosed in an oak leaf wreath.

Dietrich had originally received the Knights Cross on 7 July 1940 following the French campaign. On 6 August 1944, while commanding the SS Panzer Corps in Normandy Dietrich would be one of 27 men to have been awarded Diamonds to the Knight's Cross.

ATROCITIES

Although SS units under his command were implicated in many of the worst incidents of atrocity in WWII, Dietrich, when he heard of excesses in his area of command stepped in hard. His motto was: "We are soldiers and not marauders, we are German men and must conduct ourselves in a civilised manner wherever we are ordered."

On 27 July 1943 Dietrich left the LAH to command

I SS-Panzer Korps, composed of SS Panzer Divisions *Leibstandarte* and *Hilter Jugend*. During the Normandy campaign these formations frustrated enemy attempts to break out of Caen for two months. Throughout the battle Dietrich turned up where the fighting was heaviest, speaking to wounded, issuing orders and assembling reserves.

LOSS OF FAITH

The losses incurred were catastrophic, and Dietrich realised that the game was up for the German armies in the West. With Rommel he wrote a memorandum calling upon Hitler to conclude a ceasefire with the allies to allow German forces to be transferred to the East. The memorandum was never sent.

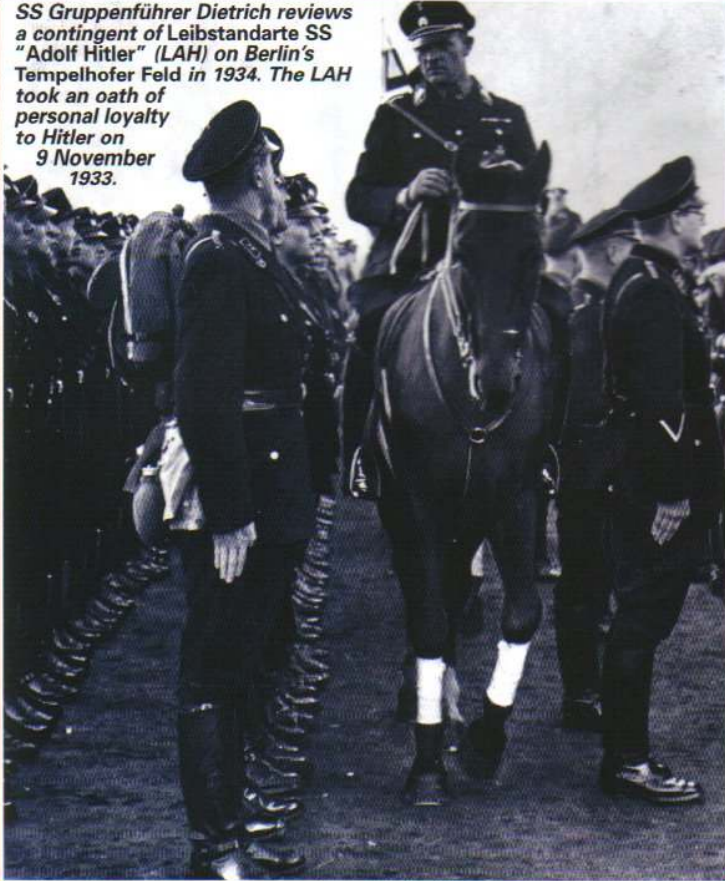
On 26 October 1944 he took command of 6th *SS-Panzer Armee*. Though this command was far beyond his intellectual capabilities, Hitler had lost faith in senior Army officers after the July bomb Plot, and only trusted the *Waffen-SS*.

But even that trust was shattered as the Third Reich collapsed. In April 1945



Long Knives

SS Gruppenführer Dietrich reviews a contingent of Leibstandarte SS "Adolf Hitler" (LAH) on Berlin's Tempelhofer Feld in 1934. The LAH took an oath of personal loyalty to Hitler on 9 November 1933.



Above: The main executors of the Röhm purge confer shortly after its completion. With the support of the Reichswehr the LAH assumed chief responsibility for the dirty business of arresting and liquidating SA leaders in Bavaria and Berlin. With internal opposition removed, the Party – and Germany – was now under Hitler's absolute control.

IN DIE NACHT der Langen Messe – The Night of the Long Knives, or Röhm Purge – of 30 June 1934, the SS was the instrument of Hitler's crackdown against Nazi rival Ernst Röhm and his SA Storm Troopers.

On 26 June, SS and SD officers were warned by Himmler of an impending SA revolt. A day later Sepp Dietrich ordered the LAH to collect weapons and transport from the Army HQ in Berlin.

Dietrich and the *Leibstandarte* were under Hitler's direct orders, and two companies were moved to Munich by rail and truck. They accompanied the Führer to Bad Weissee where the SA high command was carousing. When Röhm and his associates had been arrested, Hitler instructed Dietrich to "Go back to barracks, select an officer and six men and have the SA leaders shot for high treason".

When a startled SA man was led out from Stadelheim prison to the execution yard and saw Dietrich he exclaimed "Sepp, my friend, what is happening? We are completely innocent!". Dietrich replied "You have been condemned to death by the Führer. Heil Hitler!" and gave the order to fire.

On Sunday 1 July Hitler gave instructions to Dietrich that Röhm was to be killed. A squad of SS men led by Dachau commandant Theodore Eicke entered Röhm's cell and shot him dead. Hitler was elsewhere at a public function.

Hitler now had no rivals, but an additional effect of the purge was to secure the power base of Himmler and the SS. Having provided such loyal service, Dietrich and the LAH looked to more challenging tasks than guard duties and executions.

Hitler, angered by the inability of the Waffen-SS to hold back the overwhelming Red Army drive through Hungary, ordered that they be stripped of their distinctive divisional cuff titles.

An enraged Dietrich said, "let's take a chamber pot, put all our medals into it, and around it tie the ribbon of Götz von Berlichingen division and send it to Berlin". Von Berlichingen was a 16th Century knight: in Goethe's play, Götz von Berlichingen says to the Bishop of Bamberg "You can kiss my arse."

When Dietrich was captured at the end of the war, one US intelligence officer said that the SS man reminded him of "a rather battered bar-tender". On 16 July 1946 he was sentenced to 25 years imprisonment for his part in the Malmédy Massacre but was released from Landsberg prison in October 1955. In Munich in May 1957 a German court sentenced him to 18 months for his part in the killing of SA leaders during the Röhm purge. Upon his release he lived quietly and died in Ludwigsburg on 21 April 1966. Five thousand former SS men attended his funeral.

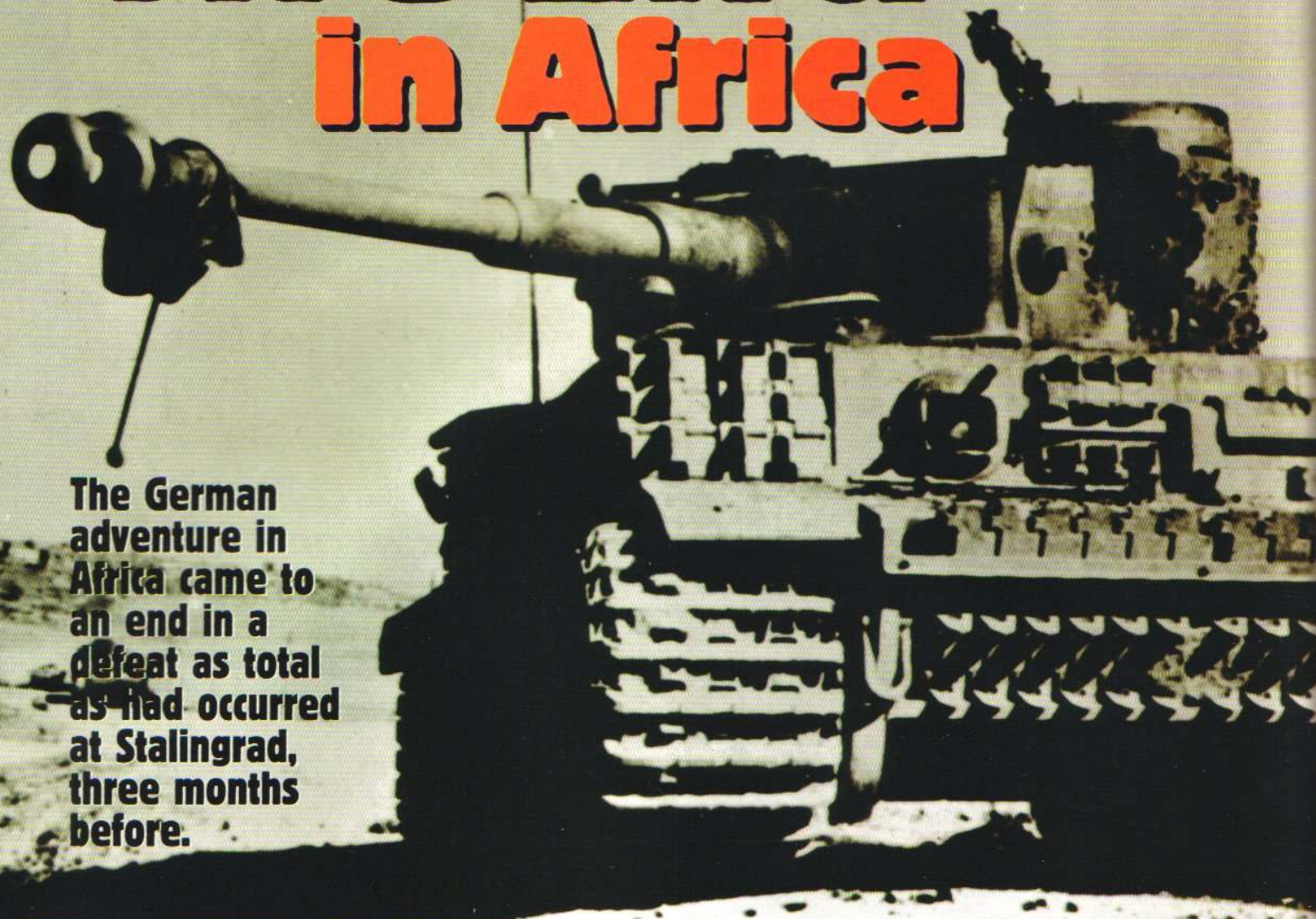
Dietrich in characteristically relaxed mood on the set of the UFA film "Sherlock Holmes" in May 1937. One colleague said of Sepp that he "was always ready for anything and had a sense of humour, which was rather on the robust side."





The End in Africa

The last Panzer to appear in North Africa was the massive PzKpfw VI Tiger, with its thick armour and deadly 88-mm gun. Only one battalion of these behemoths was sent to Tunisia.



The German adventure in Africa came to an end in a defeat as total as had occurred at Stalingrad, three months before.

IN APRIL 1943 Hans von Luck, the commander of an Afrika Korps reconnaissance battalion, was flown to Germany on the orders of General von Arnim, commander-in-chief of Axis forces in North Africa. Perhaps, where Rommel and Arnim had failed, this highly decorated young officer could succeed. Perhaps the Führer would listen to a frontline soldier.

It was a dangerous flight from Tunis to Sicily: he travelled in a Heinkel He 111 flying at wave

top height to avoid detection and the inevitable swarm of Spitfires. Von Luck reached Berchtesgaden, where he met the recently reinstated *Generaloberst* Heinz Guderian, now inspector of panzer forces. He got as far as the office of General Alfred Jodl who forbade him to see Hitler. The mere mention of another retreat would send Hitler into a rage and his entourage were terrified of the Führer's anger.

So Rommel's plan for a systematic withdrawal of Axis forces in North Africa was turned down. Tunisia was to hold out,

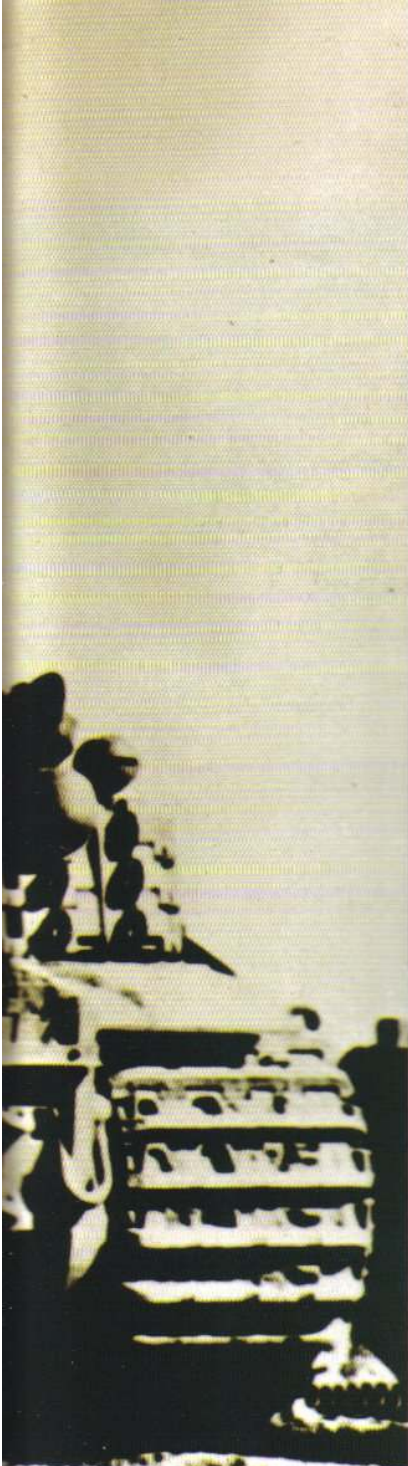
postponing an Allied assault on Italy for as long as possible. There was to be no 'German Dunkirk' as Rommel described it. Instead, there was another Stalingrad – dubbed 'Tunisgrad' by the bitter survivors. For the second time in three months, Hitler delivered over 100,000 German soldiers into enemy hands.

BEGINNING OF THE END

To understand how this catastrophe came about, it is necessary to go back to the autumn of 1942, when Rommel's Afrika Korps was compelled to

hold its ground – by Hitler's express order – and be pounded to pieces by Montgomery's Eighth Army.

On 8 November 1942 British and American forces landed in Morocco and Algeria. It was the most ambitious amphibious operation up to that time: 35,000 US troops were shipped straight across from America; another 49,000 from their bases in Britain, together with 23,000 British and Commonwealth soldiers. Nearly 400 transport ships were involved, escorted by six battleships, eleven aircraft



"Ammunition shot off, arms and equipment destroyed. In accordance with orders received, DAK has fought itself to the condition it can fight no more. The German Afrika Korps must rise again. Heia Safari!"

**General Cramer
last commander of the
Deutsche Afrika Korps
May 1943**



The DAK fought with stubborn efficiency to the bitter end, but Hitler was deaf to all pleas to evacuate Tunisia. His refusal doomed 250,000 Axis troops to captivity, including 100,000 German veterans with irreplaceable experience.

carriers, fifteen cruisers and over a hundred destroyers and anti-submarine vessels.

Algeria was a French colony, administered by the Vichy regime and many units of the French garrison resisted the Allied landings. Only two years before the British had attacked the French fleet in Algeria, killing over a thousand French sailors. Opposition at Oran, scene of what many Frenchmen saw as British perfidy, was especially fierce. At Casablanca, the incomplete French battleship *Jean Bart* had to be overpowered

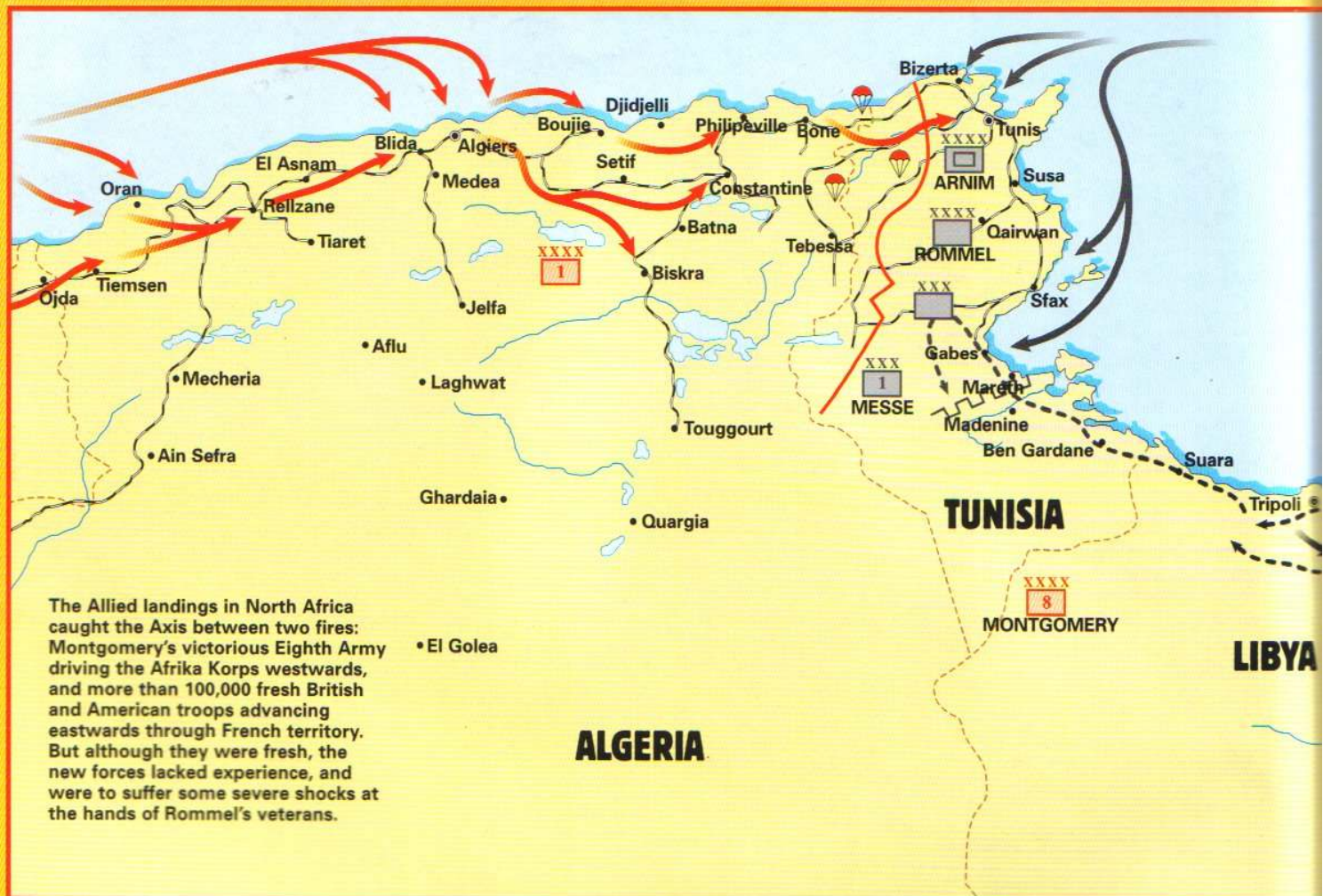
by the USS *Massachusetts*, and several French submarines were sunk by US carrier aircraft as they attacked the troop transports. But the French colonial army was too small, too poorly equipped and internally divided: it could only impose a brief delay before the Algeria's ports were in Allied hands, and Allied troops were heading east along the coastal plain. Ahead lay Tunisia and 1500 km beyond in Libya, Rommel's Afrika Korps. Caught between two fires, the 'Desert Fox' was doomed.

Or so the Allies thought.

General Walter Nehring had been wounded in August while in command of the Afrika Korps at Alam Halfa. Recovering in Germany, he was surprised to be ordered not to resume his command but to fly to Tunisia and hold it for Germany.

IMPROVISED DEFENCE

He reached the city on 16 November. There he found two battalions of German paratroops, a parachute engineer battalion, a reconnaissance company and a battery of 88 mm anti-aircraft guns. There were two battalions



The Allied landings in North Africa caught the Axis between two fires: Montgomery's victorious Eighth Army driving the Afrika Korps westwards, and more than 100,000 fresh British and American troops advancing eastwards through French territory. But although they were fresh, the new forces lacked experience, and were to suffer some severe shocks at the hands of Rommel's veterans.

of Italian naval infantry ashore at Bizerta, with a couple of S-boats off the coast. Some 14,000 French colonial troops were stationed in the area, their loyalty and intentions uncertain.

QUICK REACTION

Within 48 hours American armoured cars were reported crossing the frontier, passing through the French units in the area unopposed. Nehring improvised a number of *kampfgruppen* as additional German forces flew into Tunis, despatching them into the hinterland to create as large a bridgehead as possible. A pupil of Rommel's, he acted in the correct belief that a company on the spot today is worth a battalion there tomorrow.

German aircraft were shuttled over from Sicily, and on

19 November, after the expiry of an ultimatum to the local French forces, they bombed French positions between Beja and Medjez El Bab.

In mainland France, German forces poured into the Vichy rump state, their primary target Toulon where the French fleet lay at anchor. But the SS armoured columns were too late: on Admiral Darlan's orders, the warships were scuttled. The French army of Tunisia was disarmed by the Germans, but many men, often in formed units, fled westwards to the Allies.

France's definitive African regiments, the *Chasseurs d'Afrique*, began the campaign in Algeria by taking on the Americans, but ended it fighting in a composite French division on the Allied side.

On the coast road, the German

airborne engineers blocked the leading echelons of the British 78th division and the 2nd *Fallschirmjäger* regiment stopped the US advance on Medjez.

The Germans rushed their men into Tunis faster than the Allies could advance from their beachheads in Algeria. Within three days of the Allied landings, there were a thousand extra Axis soldiers in Algeria; a week later, 4,500. Some 20,000 German troops arrived over the following ten days, brought over from Sicily by some 673 transport aircraft.

The transports flew in *pulks*, close formations of 30 to 40 aircraft escorted by a handful of fighters and staying no more than 50 metres above the water in order to minimize the chance of radar detection.

Sometimes they were too

late. A drop on one airfield was cancelled with the planes in the air: British parachutists had seized it that morning. On 25 November, an American armoured column overran Djedeida airfield.

Nevertheless, by 1 December 27,550 Axis troops had taken up defensive positions in Algeria, and the Allied advance had stalled. General von Arnim arrived on 8 December to take command of all Axis troops in what was now designated 5. *Panzerarmee*.

ROMMEL IN TUNISIA

Rommel's *Panzerarmee Afrika* did not withdraw into Tunisia until 13 February – two years and a day since the arrival of the Afrika Korps in Tripoli. His retreat across Libya was harried from the air, but efforts to



Retreat to Tunis

- Allied front line Feb 1943
- German landings from 4 Nov
- Allied landings and advances
- - - Axis retreats
- = Defensive lines
- Parachute drops



AFTER EL ALAMEIN The Desert War for the Afrika Korps was one long series of retreats and defensive actions, until inevitably they were thrown out of Africa in May 1943. But Rommel and von Arnim had bought the Germans enough time to prepare their defences in Sicily and more importantly Italy, where the Allies were committed to striking next.

The Anglo-American landings in North-West Africa on 8 November 1942 were a gamble. Designed to take Axis forces in Libya from the rear, they partly depended on the attitude of the Vichy French authorities for their success. Intense negotiations with French Admiral Darlan came to nothing and some of the landings were opposed. Only after intense fighting were Oran and Casablanca taken.

The German response was swift, with reinforcements, including elite parachute formations, being sent from Sicily on 9 November. Vichy France itself was occupied on 27 November. The Allies nearly succeeded in catching the Axis forces in Tunisia by surprise, but they failed to consolidate their successes before strong German forces were in place to oppose them. The Allied offensive had ground to a halt by mid-December.

In mid-January, following a meeting between Churchill and Roosevelt at Casablanca, the Allied commander General Eisenhower began to concentrate on planning future Allied operations in Italy, leaving the Tunisian battle to General Sir Harold Alexander.

Within a month Rommel had linked up with Axis forces in Tunisia, and, holding the Allies down on the newly-constituted Mareth line turned his attentions on the Americans.

On 14 February 10th Panzer Division attacked the US at Sid Bou Zid in the Dorsal Mountains. The Americans withdrew to Kasserine where they were ferociously attacked on 20 February. But when they fell back Rommel could not press home his advantage, and Allied forces quickly plugged the gap to stop any further German advance.

overtake and trap him on land were ineffective. There was a half-hearted attempt to repeat the British triumph of February 1941, when they reached Beda Fomm before the retreating Italians. But German rearguards were alert. Rommel reached El Agheila, then continued to pull back westwards, through Homs, until he evacuated Tripoli on 19 January.

LAST CHANCE SALOON

The bulk of Rommel's troops dug in on the Mareth line, where the coastal plain narrows opposite the island of Djerba. His premier tank formation, 21st Panzer Division was detached to von Arnim, where, undetected by the Allies, the Germans planned an audacious assault against the American forces around Kasserine. The German offensive – the last in

North Africa – caught the Americans off-guard. But the success was local: Axis forces were exhausting themselves swimming vainly against the tide that was engulfing them. The Allies were too numerous and too well supplied. US rations were so generous they included oranges, shipped from California and consumed among Tunisia's fruit farms. Early American weaknesses were unlikely to be repeated now they were under the command of the swashbuckling General Patton.

Rommel returned to the Mareth line, where the British had closed up and were preparing to attack. On 6 March Rommel anticipated the British with an offensive of his own: straight down the coastal road to Medenine. It was doomed from the start. Montgomery had

Operation Torch transports, silhouetted by the slanting rays of the sun, wait off-shore during landing operations at Mers-El-Kebir in the Oran area of Algeria.





Above: By early 1943 the Luftwaffe had lost the battle for air superiority. As long as weather permitted Allied aircraft could attack Axis positions without fear of Luftwaffe response. Ground forces had therefore to be self-reliant in protecting themselves against air assault.



Above: The North African war was not always fought under the heat of a burning sky. The campaigning year was limited to the dry season as the rains made the desert tracks impassable. For the Germans in the winter of 1942/43 the bad weather came as a welcome respite.

Below: Some of the US troops landed in Africa during Operation Torch had travelled non-stop from America. Many of these inexperienced, over-confident men had bought a one-way ticket. America was to learn the hard way not to underestimate German fighting men.



ample warning from ULTRA and prepared a gigantic ambush: the sort of *Pakfront* that had taken such a toll of British armour in the earlier days of the desert war. In a personal letter, Montgomery explained Rommel's actions to Field Marshal Sir Alan Brooke: 'He is trying to attack me in daylight with tanks, followed by lorried infantry. I have 500 6-pdr anti-tank guns dug in on the ground: I have 400 tanks; and I have good infantry, holding strong pivots, and a great weight of artillery. It is an absolute gift, and the man must be mad.'

It was over in 24 hours. Of the 141 tanks in Rommel's three panzer divisions, 52 were left on the battlefield. On 9 March Rommel handed over command to von Arnim and flew to Rome for medical treatment. Officially, he would return when fit, but he knew in his heart he would not see Africa again.

Montgomery duly battered his way through the Mareth line, characteristically recommending his defensive action at Medenine and the breakthrough at Mareth as models for future study by the Staff College.

MONTGOMERY ON THE OFFENSIVE

In fact, his attack did not conform half so neatly to expectation as he proclaimed. Arnim withdrew to Wadi Akarit, a natural barrier north of Mareth where on flank rested on the steeply sloped jebel, the other on the sea. The British balked at the idea of bouncing the Germans out of the position before they had a chance to fortify it.

Instead, Montgomery launched a night attack with two infantry divisions on 5 April. Elements of the 4th Indian division overran German positions in the hills, attacking in complete silence, the stealthy tactics of the North-West Frontier proving a match even for German veterans. A ferocious infantry battle took place on the plain before the

Germans were driven back, but despite the Allies' overwhelming advantage in armour the Germans still managed to break away without being shattered by a tank attack.

VON LUCK LUCKLESS

On 10 April the British Eighth and First armies met. Arnim presided over a dangerously shallow bridgehead around Tunisia and the end was no longer in doubt. Yet neither his pleas for a withdrawal order, nor Rommel's personal meeting with Hitler persuaded the Führer to give up Africa before it was too late. Hence von Luck's futile mission to Berchtesgaden. Arnim faced the biggest concentration of British troops yet seen in World War II: three tank and seven infantry divisions. Together with the Free French and the US 2nd Corps (three infantry and one tank divisions) the odds were overwhelming.

PATTON IN CHARGE

America's best fighting general of the war, George S. Patton transformed 2nd Corps. "Go until the last shot is fired and the last drop of gasoline is gone and then go forward on foot," he was quoted as saying. He led from the front, like Rommel, getting strafed by the Luftwaffe twice on the opening day of his offensive at El Guettar on 21 March. Minutes after he left one frontline position, it was struck by a German artillery salvo. When a night air raid on his headquarters was reported as a ground attack, Patton burst out of his tent, carbine in hand.

GIs in the 9th division were surprised to find a three-star general in their midst one night during another German attack – and amused by his loud order to "get those staff officers out of those holes and up here where they can be shot at". Patton's scorn for the Allied tactical air forces in North Africa, commanded by an RAF Air Vice Marshal, came close to causing an international incident.

German armour at Kasserine was outnumbered, as was often the case in Africa. This Panzer IV mounts a long-barrelled 75 mm gun which was more than a match for Allied tanks, and the crew members have attached spare track wherever possible along the hull front for added protection.

Masterclass at Kasserine

BY EARLY 1943, the Axis were being squeezed between the pincers of the Eighth Army driving north and the Americans driving east. Germany needed a miracle to avoid being swept from Africa.

General Arnim favoured a modest counterstroke, aimed to win time. Rommel – even a desperately ill Rommel, haunted by his long retreat and the loss of Hitler's favour – designed a knock-out blow. His plan involved cutting off the leading British and American divisions with an all-out offensive that swept from Kasserine to the Mediterranean.

The attack broke over the heads of General Lloyd Frendenall's US 2nd Corps. Frendenall has been described by military historian Carlo D'Este as "one of the most inept senior officers to hold a high command during World War II." US forces were scattered over a wide front, their commander 65 miles behind the lines where he ordered his combat engineer battalion to build him an underground bunker complex. His subordinates were little better. As one GI put it, "never were so few commanded by so many from so far away."

For the last time Rommel was in the thick of battle, having shattered an enemy. Piles of high quality booty drooped into his hands, and bewildered American prisoners poured in. Rommel's actions were assisted by poor weather. Though it meant that he had no Luftwaffe support, it also meant that the Allied air superiority could not count.

But it did not last. Fatally, Rommel split up his forces, claiming that "by deploying troops at several danger points I hoped to split the enemy forces up more than my own." It was contrary to the principle of concentration that had served him so well in the past, and it did not work. Given interception of Rommel's coded signals the Allies could place just enough of a holding force against the German probing attacks. The assault eventually ground down.

The delay gave the Allies time to rush up reserves, and by the evening of the 22 February Rommel had to accept that his grandiose counterstroke could not work, and called off the assault.



Above: The last triumphs in North Africa were led by a strongly reinforced Panzer arm. If these up-gunned and more heavily-armoured vehicles had been allocated to Rommel earlier in the 1942 campaigning season he might have taken Cairo and Suez.

Below left: The terrain in Tunisia was perfect for defensive operations. Advancing armour inevitably had to be channelled down the passes between the mountains and could be easily ambushed.

Below: The US II Corps was lured to destruction in the same way that British armour had often been before El Alamein. American confidence had taken a shattering blow, though it soon recovered.



HITLER'S BATTLES 15



Above : A Ju 52 is strafed, one of its crew members lying dead under the wing after having been forced into an emergency landing. This lightly-armed and lumbering mainstay of the Luftwaffe resupply units was a sitting-duck to Allied fighters.

Below: A Jagdpanzer 38(t) Hetzer is knocked out by an American with a 2.75 inch anti-tank rocket launcher. The simplicity and effectiveness of the 'bazooka' impressed the Germans and they soon produced similar weapons themselves.



On 23rd March Patton shattered a counter-attack by 10th Panzer Division, then went on to drive the Germans out of their defensive positions. A month after Kasserine, American self-confidence was restored.

SINK, BURN, DESTROY!

Ground down by the British and resurgent Americans, Hitler's Army Group Africa experienced grave shortages of fuel and ammunition as its air bridge came under attack by Allied fighters. Allied naval forces swept the coast, obeying Admiral A.B.C. Cunningham's unambiguous orders to 'Sink, burn, destroy! Let nothing past!' The Luftwaffe ran out of fighter aircraft and many 'pulses' of Ju 52s were intercepted by Allied aircraft – even being attacked twin-engine bombers on one occasion.

By April no more personnel were allowed to fly into Africa, so von Luck was unable to return to his command. Casualties among German transport squadrons were severe, coming as they did in the wake of the Stalingrad debacle. A total of 177 Ju 52s and six Me 323s were shot down. As the Luftwaffe had already pressed its flight instructors and their more experienced pupils in the frontline squadrons, it was unable to replace them.

The final battle began on

6 May. Organised resistance collapsed that morning, Arnim's weak divisions having so little fuel that counter-attacks were no longer possible. By the afternoon of the following day, British troops were on the outskirts of Tunis and the defence had fragmented into isolated pockets. Arnim was captured on 12 May, and the surrender of the remaining Axis forces ordered that day.

Over 100,000 German soldiers were taken prisoner as well as 90,000 Italians. General Alexander signalled Churchill in triumphant mood, "It is my duty to report that the Tunisian campaign is over. All enemy resistance has ceased. We are masters of the North African shores."

British losses in Tunisia included over 6,000 dead and 30,000 wounded and missing – even when outnumbered and outgunned, the German army was an unforgiving, ruthlessly professional opponent.

Hitler had clung too long to his African enclave, but deserves credit for flinging troops into Tunisia at the end of 1942, when professional advice was to withdraw to Europe. The campaign kept the Allies away from Italy until the Autumn, by which time the Wehrmacht would have vastly increased its strength in the country and made its conquest much more difficult.

Below: Headed by 'Old Glory' American troops set off for the aerodrome at Maison Blanche outside Algiers. American landings here, unlike the rest of the operation, were virtually unopposed. Only two destroyers were lost and a few infantrymen were hit by die-hard snipers. The landings marked the beginning of the end for Panzerarmee Afrika.



LAST STAND OF THE **AFRIKA KORPS**





With their efficient uniforms, cut-down helmets (designed to avoid snagging parachute rigging) and automatic weapons, Germany's elite Fallschirmjäger have some claim to being the first truly modern infantrymen.

FALLSCHIRMJÄGER HUNTERS FROM THE SKIES

The Luftwaffe was unique among the combatants in World War II in having airborne forces under its command. Other nations recruited and trained paratroops and glider pilots as part of the army.

Inset: Adolf Hitler poses with some of the assault team which captured the Belgian fortress of Eben Emael in 1940. Many felt that special operations like this – a small, hand-picked force swooping down out of the night – was where paratroopers would shine, but the Luftwaffe had much grander plans.





MODERN AIRBORNE troops were first proposed by American general Billy Mitchell, who suggested dropping several battalions of infantry during World War I. The idea was forgotten with the 1918 armistice. It was not until 1927 that Italy experimented with the idea and by 1930 Italy had at least two trained parachute battalions.

The Soviets also saw the value of parachute troops, and started experimenting with the idea in 1928. By 1930, techniques were advanced enough to allow a small group of airborne infiltrators to 'capture' a corps headquarters during an exercise. By the mid 1930s, the Red Army was mounting massed parachute drops of 1,500 troops.

Germany, however, was the most enthusiastic advocate of the paratroop concept, since it seemed tailor-made for the *blitzkrieg* tactics being evolved by the Wehrmacht.

ORIGINS

The *Fallschirmjäger* were created at Goering's instigation in 1936 and within two years a complete division, *Fliegerdivision 7* commanded by *Generalmajor* Kurt Student, was operational. Student, a World War I fighter ace, had been initially reluctant to get involved with airborne forces, but nevertheless managed to forge a highly effective unit from the materials he was given.

Parachute training was initially undertaken at Stendal, about 100 kilometres west of Berlin. Training schools were later set up at other locations in Germany, and at Dreux near Paris. A sixteen-day course ended with six training jumps.

In a world in which soldiers were dressed in serge and wore leather soled hobnailed boots, the *Fallschirmjäger* with their special helmets, padded gauntlets, rubber soled jump boots and zippered gabardine smocks were soldiers of the future, troops suitable for the new Germany.

At the beginning of the war

4,500 paratroops were ready for action, backed up by the 12,000 men of the air-transportable 22nd Infantry Division. Although there were plans to use airborne forces in Czechoslovakia and Austria in 1938-39 and for the Polish campaign in 1939, paratroops did not see action until 9 April 1940. They were used in the assault on Denmark and in Norway in the battle for Narvik when they were landed to support mountain troops.

INVASION OF HOLLAND

Their first major operation was the May 1940 campaign in Holland. Paratroopers from *Generalleutnant* Student's 7th Air Division made a series of battalion strength jumps. *Fallschirmjäger* Regiment 1 (FJR 1) seized the two bridges at Moerdijk, and bridges at Dordecht and Waalhaven. This gave German forces a fast route across rivers and flooded land into the core of the Dutch defences.

Spearheaded by a battalion of FJR 2, the troops of the 65th and 47th Infantry Regiments of the 22nd Air Landing Division under *Generalleutnant* Graf Sponeck were tasked with the capture of the Dutch government and the Hague and the airfields at Delft and Ypenburg. The airlanding forces came under sustained anti-aircraft fire and were widely scattered along the coast.

However, they enjoyed more success at Rotterdam airport where they were supported by the 3rd Battalion of FJR 1 and backed up by troops diverted from The Hague and Valkenburg.

EBEN EMAEL

At the same time in Belgium, the paratroops launched an extraordinary operation against the fortress of Eben-Emael.

The massive concrete fortification covered key bridges across the Albert Canal at Canne, Vroenhoven and Veldwezelt. At dawn on 10 May, ten gliders carrying 55 assault engineers of the Koch Assault Detachment from FJR 1, commanded by



Above: The Luftwaffe learned from Italian and Soviet experience of the 1920s and 1930s when setting up their own parachute force, but quickly surpassed their mentors. Not the least of their advantages was the possession of a stable and reliable drop platform, the Junkers Ju 52.

Below: German *Fallschirmjäger* drop onto a glacier in northern Norway. They have been deployed to support mountain troops fighting the British and French at Narvik. Air mobility gave the Germans the first example of what would now be called a rapid deployment force.





Above: The invasion of Crete was the first major airborne assault in history. Over 8,000 men were delivered by parachute and glider in the face of fierce resistance. Over 200 aircraft were shot down: most of the losses were Junkers Ju 52s.

Below: The Fallschirmjäger had performed well in Greece, so their losses in Crete came as a severe shock. Total German losses in the assault were more than 4,000 killed or missing with a further 2,500 wounded. Hitler forbade any further assaults.



Leutnant Rudolf Witzig, landed within the fortress perimeter. Using shaped charges they attacked the armoured casemates housing the 120-mm and 75-mm artillery. For six killed and 20 wounded they held the fortress for 24 hours before being relieved by the 61st Infantry Division.

The glider-borne combat engineers had effectively neutralised the 700 strong Belgian Army garrison and so opened the route for German ground forces to push into France and Belgium. Glider born troops and paratroops also seized the bridges across the Albert Canal.

INVASION OF GREECE

The next major parachute operations came a year later in Greece. On 25 April 1941 the reinforced FJR 2 under *Oberst* Sturm was tasked with the capture of the bridge across the deep Corinth Canal that separated the southern Peloponnese from the rest of Greece. A mixed force of gliders and paratroops captured the bridge before it could be demolished.

The German airborne forces suffered only eight killed but they were to be cheated of their objective when a stray shell or bullet triggered the demolition charges attached to the bridge and dropped it deep into the canal. But this was only the prologue. The main act came the following month.

CRETE

In May 1941, 13,000 paratroops of the 7th Air Division under *Generalleutnant* Kurt Student and 9,000 men of the 5th Mountain Division under *-Generalmajor* Julius Ringel, under the overall command of *Generaloberst* Alexander Lohr, were committed to the capture of the island of Crete. They were supported by 500 fighters and bombers, 500 transports and 80 gliders.

The island was held by 28,000 British and Commonwealth troops, reinforced by Greek battalions and Cretan irregulars who brought the total strength up to



Above: Fallschirmjäger march through Tunis on 4 February 1943. VII Fliegerdivision had been withdrawn from Russia in July 1942 for a possible assault on Malta, but all available paratroopers were rushed to North Africa at the end of the year, after the Allied invasion of Algeria.



Right: With the establishment of a second airborne division, VII Fliegerdivision was renamed I Fliegerdivision. It was flown to southern Italy after the invasion of Sicily, and was quickly deployed to the island in a futile attempt to stem the Allied tide.

42,500. Though the Allied forces were very poorly equipped and many had been recently evacuated from mainland Greece they had a major advantage over their adversaries. ULTRA decrypts had given their commander, Major General Bernard Freyburg a complete breakdown of the German plans. ULTRA intelligence had earlier allowed the British to withdraw successfully from Greece.

The attack, code named Operation *Merkur* (Mercury), divided the island into four drop zones, from Maleme in the west through Canea, Retimo and Heraklion in the east. Lack of transport aircraft meant that the island was attacked in two waves: in the morning and in the afternoon of 20 May. The first wave, Group West under *Generalmajor* Eugen Meindl landed in the Maleme/ Canea drop zone. In the afternoon, Group Centre under *Generalmajor* Süssmann landed at Retimo. Group East under *Generalleutnant* Julius Ringel would be spearheaded by paratroops of FJR 1 and a battalion of FJR 2, who would

seize the airfield at Heraklion to allow the 5th Mountain Division to be landed by Ju 52s.

STIFF OPPOSITION

The response of the Imperial and Greek forces to the German attacks was violent and effective. Those men who had landed at Retimo and Heraklion suffered heavily and were effectively bottled up. Only at Maleme airfield did the paratroops manage to find cover and set up a viable base in the dried up riverbed of the river Tavronitis.

The key feature, a hill known as Point 107 which dominated the airfield, was held by the New Zealand 22nd Battalion. Under pressure and without reliable communications they pulled back and this gave the Germans their opening. With an airfield in their possession they poured in reinforcements.

The island fell to the Germans, but the airborne forces suffered very heavy losses – 4,000 were killed, 2,000 wounded and 220 aircraft were destroyed. Among the losses was a seaborne convoy of Greek fishing vessels carrying heavy

equipment, which was intercepted at night by the Royal Navy and destroyed.

Hitler declared that “the day of the paratrooper is over” and with these words he condemned this force to a ground role, when it could have been better used against Malta or Cyprus.

PARAS ON THE GROUND

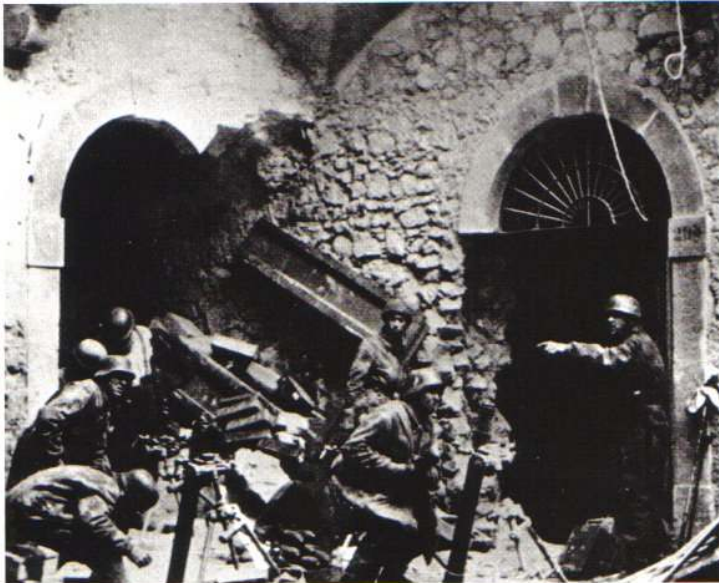
As elite ground forces the *Fallschirmjäger* fought in North Africa and on the Eastern Front. They defended Sicily and Italy – notably at Monte Cassino, and fought in Normandy, Holland and in the final defence of Eastern Europe. In North Africa, Sicily, Normandy and Holland the German paratroops found themselves fighting British and American paratroops who had landed to secure beachheads or bridges. Hitler paid tribute to the *Fallschirmjäger* during the fight for Monte Cassino saying they were harder than the *Waffen-SS*.

On the night of 13-14 July 1943, as part of Operation Husky, the Allied invasion of Sicily, the British 1st Air-Landing Brigade was tasked with the capture of the Simeto Bridge

north of the town of Primasole. The British troops, landing by glider, were widely scattered but managed to hold the bridge until they were forced to withdraw. The troops who forced them out were men of FJR 3, and the Machine Gun and Engineer Battalions of FJR 4. They had flown from bases in southern France, via Italy to Sicily and jumped at Catania airport on 12 July as part of a rapid reinforcement for the island.

MUSSOLINI RESCUE

On 12 September 1943 paratroops of the 1st Company of the *Fallschirmjäger Lehrbataillon* (training battalion) commanded by *Leutnant* von Berlepsch, and a small group of *Waffen-SS* men commanded by *Obersturmbannführer* Otto Skorzeny were carried in 12 DFS 230 gliders to rescue the Italian leader Benito Mussolini. Following his arrest by the Italian authorities the former Italian leader had been held in a remote hotel on the Gran Sasso plateau near Rome. Since the hotel could only be reached by a funicular railway, airborne assault was the



Above: The Fallschirmjäger expanded rapidly in 1943 and 1944, as another four divisions were formed. However, only I and II were real paratroopers. I Division served in Italy for the rest of the war, and was to form an important part of the German defences at Cassino.

Above right: The paratroopers were an elite fighting force, and as such they were often thrown into battle at the most desperate point. As a result, they suffered heavy losses in killed, wounded and captured. These Fallschirmjäger have been captured by New Zealanders, getting some measure of revenge for Commonwealth losses in Crete.

Below: Wounded Fallschirmjäger rest before returning to the line. By the last years of the war, most units were made up from redundant Luftwaffe personnel drawn from air, communications and flak units.



only viable option. Eight of the gliders reached the rocky landing zone and Mussolini was rescued. Though Paratroopers had seized the funicular railway, Skorzeny and the Duce made their exit in a hazardous flight in a Fieseler Storch observation aircraft.

AEGEAN ACTION

On 12 November 1943 a force of 500 paratroopers of the 1st Battalion of FJR 2 were used in the Aegean when they spearheaded a sea and air assault on the island of Leros, garrisoned by British and Italian troops. They were dropped onto a bone dry DZ strewn with boulders and bisected by gullies. The slow flying Ju 52s took heavy ground fire and the paratroopers had suffered 40 per cent casualties before they had even jumped. On the drop zone, broken limbs accounted for a further 20 per cent. However once on the ground the British reported them to be tough opponents. The paratroopers were reinforced with subsequent drops of men and equipment during the campaign, which resulted in an unexpected British defeat.

SS PARATROOPERS

Two airborne assaults took place in 1944 that were not conducted by men of the parachute arm of the Luftwaffe. On 25 May men of the 500th SS-Fallschirmjäger Battalion used gliders and parachutes to attack the headquarters of Tito the Yugoslav Partisan leader. Codenamed *Rösselsprung* the surprise attack

in the Drvar valley was almost successful, but the Waffen-SS paratroopers suffered heavy casualties. It was reported that the unit was made up from a mix of volunteers and men taken from penal units and was therefore deemed to be dispensable.

The battalion was reformed as 600th SS-Fallschirmjäger battalion and in July twenty gliders with parachute troops attacked the mountain stronghold of the French Maquis in the Vercors region. They inflicted heavy casualties on the French, but also committed numerous atrocities.

LAST DROP

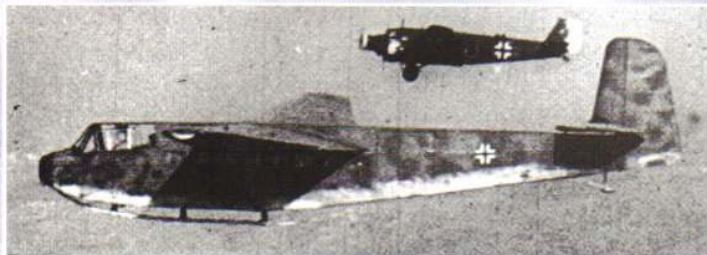
On the night of 15 December 1944, as part of the German offensive in the Ardennes, a reinforced battalion of 1,200 men from FJR 6 parachuted behind American lines near Malmédy. They were led by the veteran *Oberst Freiherr von der Heydte*, who was suffering from a broken arm and so jumped using a Russian parachute with a triangular canopy – one of the most stable parachutes then in use. The battalion was dropped by inexperienced pilots and scattered and though it caused some concern made little contribution to the main offensive. Von der Heydte, with no communications with the main German ground forces was obliged to surrender.

Fallschirmjäger continued to be used as ground troops until the close of the war, but the Ardennes was their last airborne attack.

PARATROOP PLATFORMS

Junkers Ju 52

Right and below: The workhorse of the *Fallschirmjäger* for operations and training was the tough and reliable aircraft the Ju 52 affectionately known as "Iron Annie", *Judula* or Tante Ju "Auntie Junkers". The Ju 52 was a slab sided, three motored aircraft with a striking corrugated metal fuselage and wings. It had a crew of two or three and could carry 12 parachutists or 17 men, though in emergencies it was often overloaded. The Ju 52 was powered by three 830 hp BMW engines had a top speed of 165 mph (265 kph) a ceiling of 18,000 feet (5500 meters) and range of 800 miles (1287 kilometres). About 3,000 were produced between 1939 and 1945.



Gotha Go 242

Below: The Gotha Go 242 was introduced in 1942 to replace the DFS 230. It had a crew of two and could carry 3,600 kg of cargo or 23 troops. It had a wingspan of 24.50 metres, length of 15.80 metres and height of 4.26 metres. The Go 242C was fitted with floats for a projected assault on the Royal Navy base at Scapa Flow in Scotland.



Messerschmitt Me 321

Right: Airborne success in 1940 came in spite of the lack of any means of delivering heavy equipment by air. The *Reichsluftfahrtministerium* asked Messerschmitt and Junkers to design huge transport gliders capable of carrying light armour. The Messerschmitt 321 entered service in the middle of 1941, but *Fallschirmjäger* losses in the battle for Crete meant that from that time on they were used as elite ground troops. As a result, the huge gliders were not needed, so most were converted into powered transports.



DFS 230

Left and above: The DFS 230 glider carried ten soldiers or a useful load of 1,288 kg. It landed on a skid having taken off on a jettisonable wheel undercarriage. It had a wingspan of 21.98 metres, length of 11.24 metres and a height of 2.90 metres. The DFS 230C employed rockets underneath the fuselage to act as a brake. The gliders were later used to re-supply surrounded pockets on the Eastern Front. Approximately 1,510 DFS 230 were built during the war.





The first major change in Hitler's image after coming to power was the need to depict himself as a statesman. Although his normal attire was a military style jacket with plain swastika armband, Hitler was quite prepared to don white tie and tails for diplomatic and other formal functions.

ADOLF HITLER was more than the ruler of Germany; he was the subject of one of the most intense propaganda

campaigns in history. It was a campaign which established the Führer's personality cult. There is some evidence that in his early years in power, Hitler looked on the sycophantic effusions of Goebbels' propaganda ministry with some scepticism.

FÜHRER WORSHIP

However, by the late 1930s, fuelled by total power and constant sycophancy, the Führer believed the reality of Goebbels conjured image.

The worship of Adolf Hitler was almost pathological. He was looked on as a man of destiny, even as a demi-god, and his face was everywhere.

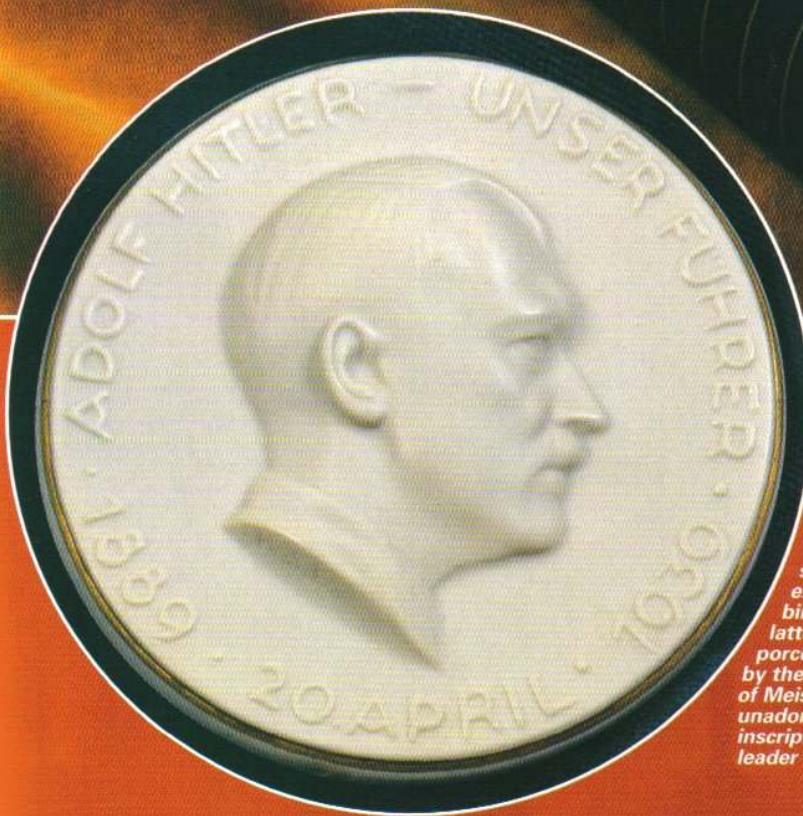
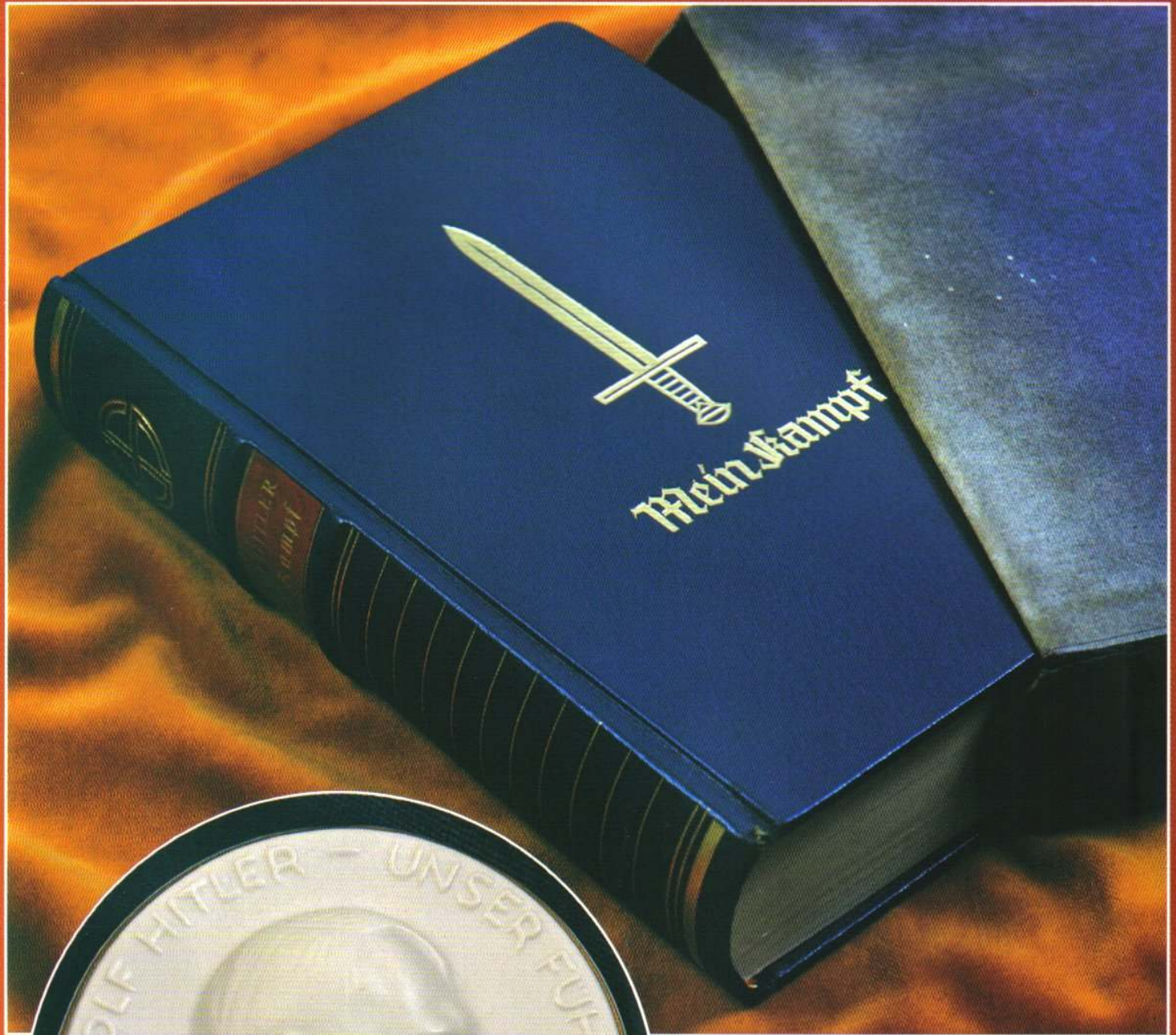
FÜHRER MEMENTOS

Most people had a portrait of the Führer or a copy of *Mein Kampf* at the very least. The public were also fed a controlled diet of Hitler images, through newspapers and illustrated magazines. A wide variety of companies made good profits from xeroxing the Führer's face, but items personally associated with the man himself were most valued. Among these were notes and gifts bearing inscriptions or a signature.

Below: Hitler meets with the British and French foreign ministers in 1934. Such events were widely publicised, usually with the slant that though Hitler was a man of the people, he was also a statesman of the first rank.

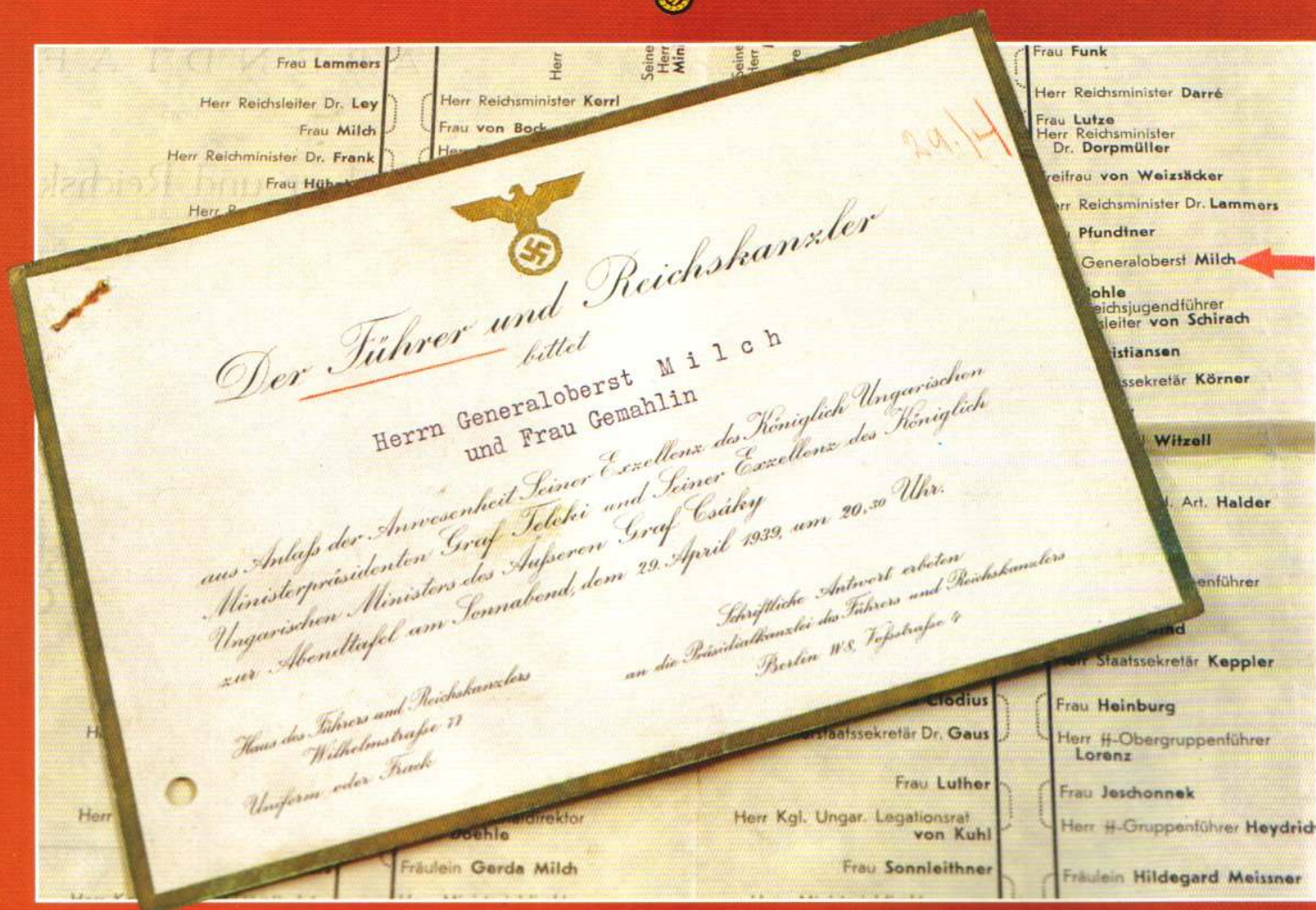


HITLER AS ICON



Left: Hitler's 50th Birthday in 1939 was the occasion of a vast amount of official celebration, ranging from military parades and massed party meetings to special dinners, childrens' parties and concerts. A wide array of souvenirs was sold, from kitsch to the extremely expensive. This birthday plaque is one of the latter: made of fine biscuit porcelain, it was manufactured by the old established company of Meissen. It is simple and unadorned, apart from the inscription "Adolf Hitler - our leader - 20 April 1939."

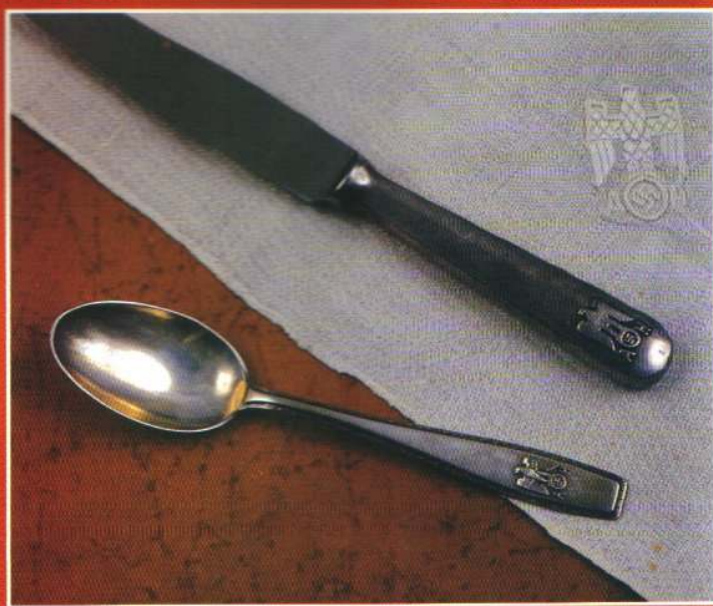
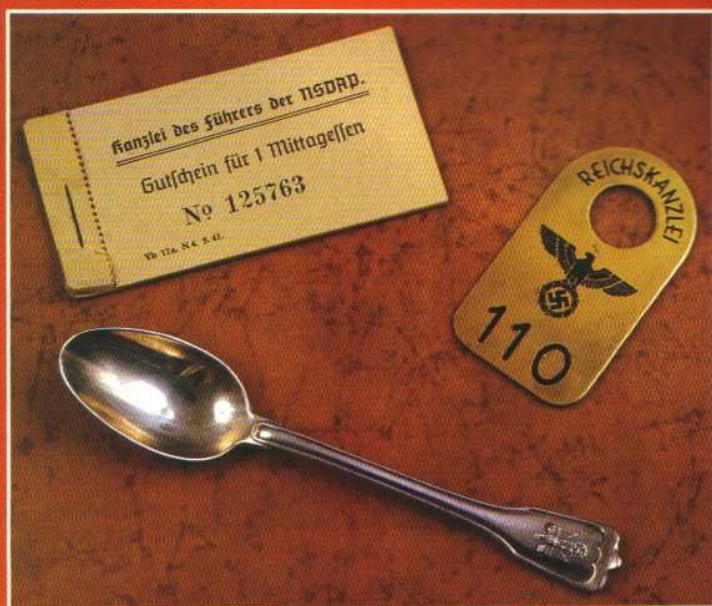
Above: In the Third Reich, anything to do with Adolf Hitler was important. One of the most ubiquitous of all Hitler symbols was *Mein Kampf*. A copy was owned by almost every Party member and by most German families. Part autobiography and part exposition of Hitler's political and philosophical ideas, it was a turgid read: postwar research has unsurprisingly shown that few of its owners ever managed more than a few pages. Originally published in two volumes in the 1920s, it appeared in a single volume bible-format edition in 1930. This blue leather-bound example is a special edition published in 1939 in honour of the Führer's 50th birthday.

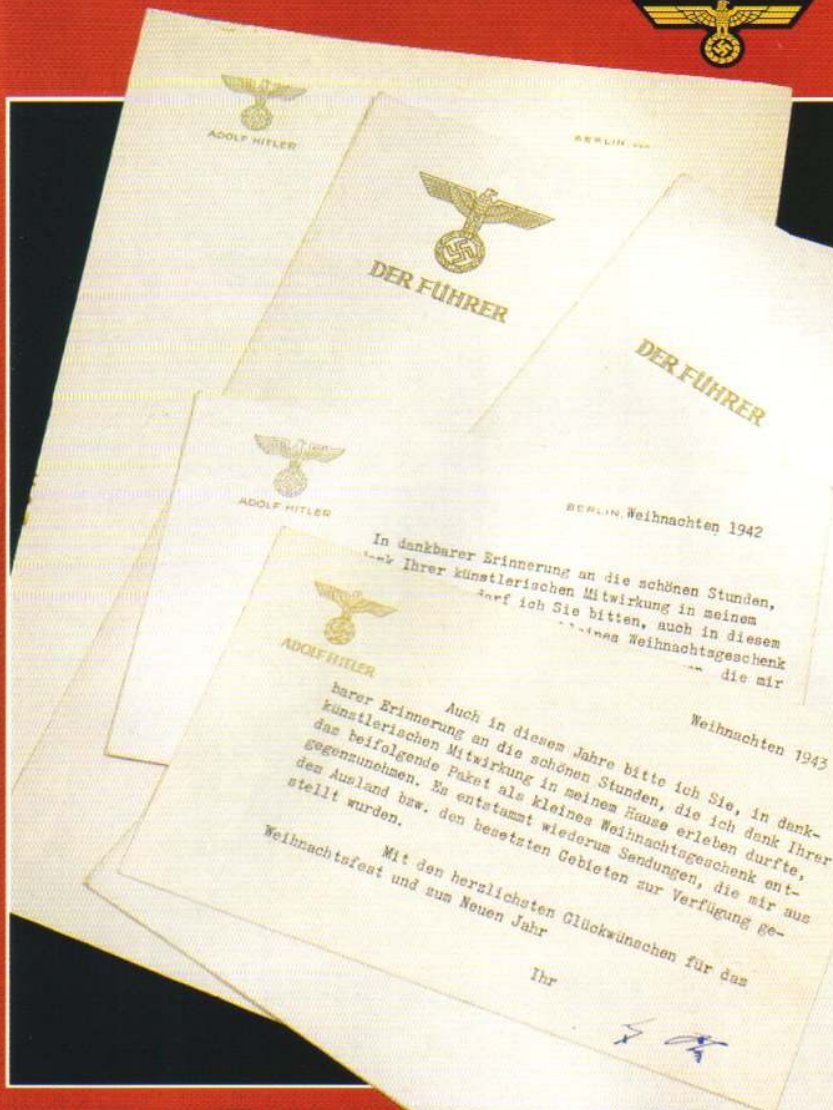


Below: Items of everyday use from the Reich Chancellery, including a teaspoon with dropping eagle/swastika, a bronze visitor's cloakroom tag, and a book of meal tickets, each entitling the bearer to a lunch in the Chancellery canteen.

Above: An invitation bidding Luftwaffe Generaloberst Erhard Milch to attend an evening reception at the Chancellery. The dinner, which took place on 29 April 1939, was in honour of an Hungarian diplomatic mission led by Count Teleki. The request to wear uniform or frack – German for tails – points to the fact that this was to be a formal dinner. The gold-edged card rests on a seating plan which would have been included with the invitation, showing Hitler at the head of the table and with Milch's position indicated by a red arrow.

Below: Hitler's personal silver cutlery, resting on one of the Führer's napkins. There were two main services: the formal service with Grecian border on the handle, used for state dinners, and the simpler informal service for Hitler's everyday use.





Below: Hitler hated routine paperwork, but could not avoid it. Here he signs a document in the Reichs Chancellery some time in the 1930s, watched by SA Staff Chief Lutze – and by a portrait of Frederick the Great. Over the years Hitler's scrawled signature grew less and less legible.



FROM THE FÜHRER'S DESK

Top: Examples of Adolf Hitler's personal stationery. Until 1942 the letters were adorned with a gold-block Party Eagle and Swastika, but later letterheads carried the 'Führer Eagle', which had straight wingtips. Towards the end of the war only the title was gold-blocked: the national symbol was blind embossed. With the writing sheets are two pre-printed cards, also showing the early and late eagles. These cards were used to reply to letters, or to accompany gifts on special occasions. All bore Hitler's signature, but very few would ever have been seen by the Führer. Routine replies carried facsimile signatures. These were of high quality and looked authentic – most of their recipients (and many post-war collectors) believed that they had been personally signed by Hitler.

Right: Adolf Hitler's ex libris bookplate used to identify items from Hitler's personal library. Engraved to a very high standard, the bookplate carries an example of the 1929 party eagle.



A Z

OF THE THIRD REICH

Messerschmitt A.G.

Messerschmitt Flugzeugbau built a series of successful gliders, sport aircraft and light transports in the mid-1920s before merging with the Bayerische Flugzeugwerke in 1927.

The merged company went bankrupt in 1931, but was reformed at Augsburg in 1933. It continued to build sports aircraft culminating in the Bf 108 four-seater monoplane, and in spite of opposition from Erhard Milch managed to get the Bf 109 fighter adopted by the Luftwaffe. This was followed by the Bf 110 heavy fighter, which with the Bf 109 was to provide the bulk of the company's prosperity.

The company expanded rapidly thereafter, and in 1938 was renamed *Messerschmitt AG*. From its original site at Augsburg it grew to control factories at Regensburg, Innsbruck, Leipheim, Schwabisch Hall,

Dingolfing, Oberpfaffenhofen, Markersdorf and Oberammergau. In 1944, Messerschmitt AG employed 33,000 people in the Augsburg area alone, having grown from just 82 employees a decade before.

Although Messerschmitt's primary concern was in building or licensing variants of the Bf 109 and Bf 110 fighters (over 30,000 of the former and 6,000 of the latter), the company also produced the Me 163 rocket fighter, the Me 262 jet fighter, the Me 323 heavy transport and the Me 210 and 410 multi-role fighter, as well as numerous prototype fighters, heavy bombers and advanced jet aircraft.

See also Hitler's Battles

Issue 5: Battle of Britain

See also Hitler's War Machine

Issue 6: Messerschmitt Bf 109



Above: A failure in its original role as a heavy fighter, the Messerschmitt Bf 110 was far more successful as a night fighter. Over 6,000 examples were built.



Right: Willi Messerschmitt made his reputation designing light sporting planes. The Bf 108 was an advanced four seat cabin monoplane which broke many class records before the war.

Messerschmitt jets

The Messerschmitt Me 262 *Schwalbe* was the world's first operational jet fighter. With a maximum speed of 869 km/h, the jet made piston-engined fighters obsolete at a stroke. Deliveries began in May 1944, but fortunately for the allies these were initially configured as bombers. Fighters entered service late in the year, and Me 262s armed with 30-mm cannon and R4M air-to-air rockets took a heavy toll of USAAF bombers during 1945. Over 1300 were built.

The Messerschmitt Me 163 *Komet* was a rocket fighter. Able to climb to 10000 metres in under

two minutes, it was the first aircraft to fly at more than 1000 km/h. Its operational debut was in July 1944 against USAAF B-17s. It flew superbly, but was hampered by very low endurance (about eight minutes) and a potentially lethal fuel mix. The *Komet* took off on a wheeled dolly and landed on a skid – and heavy landings could be explosively fatal if there were fuel residues in the aircraft's tanks.

Other Messerschmitt jet designs included the bomber-launched Me 328 parasite fighter, powered by two V1 engines, and the advanced swept-wing P.1101.



Above: The Messerschmitt P.1101 was years ahead of its time. Fortunately for the Allies, this sleek swept-wing jet was completed too late to see action.

See also Hitler's War Machine

Issue 14: German Jets

See also Hitler's War Machine

Issue 18: V-Weapons

Maschinengewehr 34/42

Most armies in the 1930s were equipped with separate light, medium and heavy machine guns. The Wehrmacht revolutionised infantry fighting by introducing the general purpose machine gun, able to fill all of these roles.

The Mauser-designed MG 34 entered large-scale service in 1936. Mounted on a bipod it was considered the primary offensive weapon of the infantry squad: mounted on a tripod with a quick-

change barrel it could be used in the sustained fire role, firing up to 900 rounds per minute.

The MG 34 was very expensive to manufacture, and during the war it was superseded by the faster-firing MG 42. This was made from metal stampings and was spot welded to speed the manufacturing process.

The MG 42 was one of the most successful machine-guns ever manufactured. Its high rate of fire – over 1200 rounds per

minute – created a characteristic 'tearing cloth' sound. The MG 42 was particularly feared by Allied soldiers who came up against it.

Right: A Wehrmacht machine gunner lays down sustained fire from a tripod-mounted MG 34. The Mauser-designed MG 34 and its cheaper but no-less successful successor, the MG 42, were the first true general-purpose machine guns, and their design was to influence most arms makers after the end of the war.



Milch, Erhard (1892 - 1972)

Born at Wilhelmshaven, Erhard Milch served in the artillery and as an air observer during World War I. He left the army in 1921, joining the *Freikorps* before going into the air transport business. In 1925 he became director of Deutsche Lufthansa.

He collaborated with the Weimar government in the establishment of a secret air arm, and from 1931 associated himself with Hermann Goering, then a member of the Reichstag.

In 1933 he was appointed State Secretary of aviation, effectively becoming deputy aviation minister and second in command of the new and secret Luftwaffe.

Goering chose to ignore persistent rumours that Milch was half Jewish.

Although not a serving military officer, Milch was given military rank, being made a *Generalmajor* in 1934. He was responsible for much of the pre-war organisational development of the Luftwaffe, and was given command of *Luftflotte V* in the invasion of Norway. After the fall of France Milch was promoted *Feldmarschall*.

From 1941 he was air inspector general and was responsible for overseeing aircraft production. Milch did not get on with the Luftwaffe's operational

commanders, and he fell out with Goering after an attempt to oust the *Reichsmarschal* following the Stalingrad debacle. He had lost most of his power by the summer of 1944, although he worked reasonably well with Speer who had taken over responsibility for aircraft production.

In 1947 Milch was tried by the international military tribunal for crimes relating to forced labour, and was sentenced to life imprisonment. He was released in 1954 and died in 1972.

Right: A key figure in the rise of the German air force, Erhard Milch fell foul of internal rivalries within the Luftwaffe High Command.



Mischlinge (Individuals of Mixed Race)

People who were of both German and Jewish ancestry according to the National Socialist racial theory were classed as *Mischlinge* or 'mixed-blood'.

Blut or 'Blood' lay at the heart of the Nazi creed: it was considered the 'bearer of life' and the 'bearer of inheritance' or *Träger des Erbgutes*. Each person was considered the product of a chain of blood mixings, and any adulteration of the pure Aryan

bloodline by other races was considered racial suicide.

The Nuremberg laws of November 1935 defined the relationships between Germans and Jews. A *Mischlinge* of the first degree or 'Half Jew' had two Jewish grandparents. Quarter Jews – *Mischlinge* of the second degree – had one Jewish grandparent. Whether a half Jew was to be considered a Jew or a *Mischlinge* depended on their

general attitude and conduct.

Those who did not adhere to the Jewish religion and had married a Gentile were classed as mixed blood: those who observed Jewish traditions were classed as full Jews. Many *Mischlinge* of the second degree continued to work in the civil service, and some mixed-blood officers continued to serve in the army – though each such case had to be personally approved by Hitler.

When the Final Solution was implemented only those German *Mischlinge* who had been sent to concentration camps in the 1930s were exterminated, though some mixed-blood Jews in Holland were deported or sterilised, and Polish *Mischlinge* were ghettoised. A proposal to sterilise mixed bloods in Germany was abandoned for fear of repercussions among their large numbers of German relatives.

Mitford, Unity Valkyrie (1914 - 1948)

The tall blond English aristocrat was one of seven children of David Bertram Ogilvy Freeman-Mitford, Second Baron Redesdale. Unity's sister married British fascist leader Oswald Mosely, and through Mosely she became an admirer of National Socialism. Mitford was introduced to Hitler in Munich in 1935, and became part of his social circle. She attempted to

influence the Führer's views about Britain, but he declined to talk about politics. There were rumours that she was the Führer's mistress.

When Britain declared war in 1939, she went to the Englischer Garten in Munich and shot herself in the head with a small calibre pistol. When Hitler heard of the suicide attempt he had specialists treat her until she was fit enough

to travel back to England via Switzerland. She died unmarried on 28 May 1948.

Right: Unity Mitford was fanatical in her adoration of Adolf Hitler. The impressions of the British he gained from her might explain his frequent miscalculations when it came to dealing with Churchill.

**See also Secret Hitler Files
Issue 8: Hitler's Women**



Model, Walther (1891 - 1945)

One of the Third Reich's most effective field commanders, Model was the son of a music teacher in Genthin near Magdeburg. He joined the Imperial army in 1910, and served with distinction during World War I. He remained in the Reichswehr after the war, but was promoted less frequently than more aristocratic officers.

Model was a supporter of Hitler, who was impressed by the energetic Prussian. He served in staff positions in Poland and France, before being given command of the 3rd Panzer Division in Russia. He became a master of defensive warfare,

being moved from trouble spot to trouble spot until he became known as 'the Führer's Fireman'. In spite of the failure at Kursk, where his 9th Army was one of the spearheads of the German assault, he remained in favour and was promoted *Feldmarschall* in March 1944, continuing to fight desperately against the advancing Red Army.

He was sent to France in August 1944, replacing *Feldmarschall* von Kluge in an unsuccessful attempt to halt the Allied breakout from Normandy. Model remained a loyal and enthusiastic Nazi to the end of the war. Trapped with 325,000

German troops in the Ruhr pocket in April 1945, he shot himself in a wood near Duisburg and died on 21 April 1945.

Below: Walther Model was a fanatical Nazi, whose undoubted military skills were tempered by the full support he gave to the SS extermination squads in Russia.



Mölders, Werner (1913 - 1941)

Werner Mölders was one of the greatest fighter aces in history. Born in Brandenburg, he was only two when his father was killed on the Western Front. Mölders joined the Reichswehr as a combat engineer, but transferred to the Reichswehr's clandestine air service. After initial difficulties with air sickness, he qualified as a pilot and quickly became a flying instructor.

In 1938 Mölders went to Spain. As commander of a Bf 109 squadron of the Kondor Legion, he scored 14 kills in two months.

During his time in Spain Mölders evolved the tactics which

gave the Luftwaffe such an advantage in the early years of World War II, and which have been the basis of all fighter combat since.

Assuming command of a *Staffel* of JG53, Mölders fought in the west in 1939 and 1940. Awarded the Knight's Cross after his 20th kill, he narrowly escaped death on 5 June 1940 when he bailed out of his Bf 109 after being attacked by a French fighter at Chantilly. Taken prisoner, he returned to combat flying after the French surrender.

Taking command of the *Geschwader* in July, Mölders' score continued to climb,

reaching 40 by 21 September. He had made 68 'kills' when the *Geschwader* was transferred eastwards for Operation Barbarossa. He was the first pilot to achieve 100 victories, for which he was awarded the Knights Cross with Oak Leaves, Swords and Diamonds.

After his 101st kill he was appointed Inspector of Fighters. He was destined to have little influence in his new role, however. On 23 November he was a passenger in an He 111 en route to Germany to attend the funeral of Ernst Udet when in poor visibility it hit a power line. Mölders was killed instantly.



Above: Werner Mölders combined supreme flying and fighting skills with highly-developed leadership qualities and great strategic and tactical skills.

Möller van den Bruck, Arthur (1876 - 1925)

Born at Solingen, Arthur Möller van den Bruck was a writer who after creating scholarly works on history, art and literature turned to political theory. Strongly influenced by Friedrich Nietzsche and Houston Stewart Chamberlain, he was the ideological force behind the 'young conservative' movement of the Weimar era.

Möller's concept of *Raum und Volk* - room and race - echoed many of the geopolitical ideas expressed by Karl Haushofer. This, together with his sympathy towards racial doctrines and the

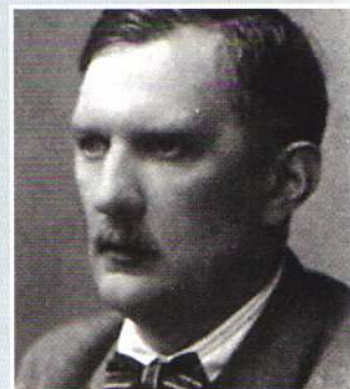
concept of the superior Nordic race, marked him down as one of the intellectual forerunners of National Socialism.

However, there were significant differences between Möller's ideas and those of Hitler. While he agreed that Germany should be an authoritarian state with a completely planned economy, Möller felt that the unifying force behind the state should be cultural rather than the Nazi ideal of race and blood. He urged Germans to return to an earlier time and identify with the living *Volkstum* - a kind of mystic

totality in which each German could sense the 'national rhythm'.

Möller committed suicide in 1925, but not before a book that encapsulated his ideas appeared. Published in 1923, it had little effect on Hitler's philosophy. But its title - *Das Dritte Reich*, or The Third Reich - was to be taken by the Nazis and made their own.

Right: Although the Nazis did not consider him to have been an influence on the rise of National Socialism, Arthur Möller van den Bruck was a very influential Volkisch writer, and the Nazis appropriated some of his ideas.



Moltke, Helmuth, James, Graf von (1907 - 1945)

Born in Kreisau, Silesia, great-grandnephew of *Feldmarschall* Helmuth von Moltke he was a legal adviser to the German High Command and an active member of the Resistance. He was a driving force in the Kreisau Circle

a small group of officers formed in 1933 to oppose Hitler and the Nazis. Among its members was Peter Graf Yorck von Wartenburg. In ten years von Moltke expanded it to twenty active members including academics and liberals.

He was arrested by the Gestapo in January 1944 for warning a friend that he was about to be arrested. When Judge Roland Freisler tried him he told von Moltke "The mask is off. Only in one respect are we and Christianity alike: we

demand the whole man". Von Moltke was hanged at Plötzensee Prison on 23 January 1945.

See also Inside the Third Reich
Issue 20: Opposition to Hitler

Morell, Dr Theodor (ca 1890 - 1948)

In the late 1920s and early 30s former Navy doctor Theodor Morell had a practice in the fashionable Kurfürstendamm in Berlin. He specialised in sexually transmitted diseases, and had actors and film stars among his patients. After he had treated and cured the seriously ill Heinrich Hoffmann with sulfanimides he had obtained from Hungary, Hitler's court photographer recommended him to the Führer. Hitler was exhausted and Morell prescribed a course of vitamins, hormones, phosphorus and dextrose which he administered by injection. It produced a feeling of well being

and Hitler announced "Morell has saved my life. It is wonderful, the way he has helped me".

Over nine years as Hitler's personal physician or *Leibarzt* Morell treated Hitler with increasingly bizarre drugs including amphetamines. The effect of the 'remedies' was to slowly poison Hitler according to SS Dr Karl Brandt, who attributed the symptoms of Hitler's Parkinson's disease to Morell's quack treatments.

Morell had many powerful enemies. Goering called him "Herr Reich Injection Master" and Eva Braun said he had the

habits of a pig. After the July Plot Morell was dropped in favour of Brandt and Doctor Ludwig Stumpfegger. He died at Tegernsee in May 1948.

Right: Doctor Theodor Morell was little more than a fashionable quack. However, it is an undeniable fact that in the early days of his association with Hitler he managed to alleviate many of the Nazi dictator's stomach pains, though Hitler's other doctors felt that he was poisoning the Führer.

See also Secret Hitler Files
Issue 4: Hitler and the Doctors



Morgenthau Plan

Henry P. Morgenthau, Franklin Roosevelt's Treasury Secretary, was a long-time associate of the President. His 14-point plan was drafted in August 1944 under the title 'Program to prevent Germany from starting World War III.' The plan included proposals that post-war Germany should be partitioned and reduced to an agricultural and pastoral economy, all heavy engineering plants should be destroyed or

given to the Allies as reparations, confiscation of Germany's foreign assets, and the forcible re-education of the German people.

Although provisionally accepted by both Roosevelt and Churchill at the Quebec Conference of September 1944, fierce opposition from Secretary of State Cordell Hull and Secretary of War Henry Stimson meant that the President later rejected the plan. However

Goebbels was able to extract considerable propaganda mileage out of it – and out of the fact that Morgenthau was Jewish. It was believed to have been one of the factors that kept Germans fighting in 1945.

Right: Henry Morgenthau, seated centre, was a passionate hater of the Nazis. His 1944 plan was designed to excise Germany's military and industrial capacity.



Mosley, Sir Oswald Ernald (1896 - 1980)

English aristocrat and rabble-rousing politician. Embittered by his experiences in WW I, Sir Oswald Mosely became a Conservative MP in 1919. He voted as an independent before transferring to the Labour Party and was a cabinet member between 1929 and 1930.

His response to the Depression – which he blamed on the ruling cliques or "old gangs" – was to found a new anti-democratic political party on the Italian model. Founded in 1932, the British Union of Fascists (BUF) grew to more than 30,000 members by 1934.

By then, the party's extreme platform had frightened off moderate support. Mosely was a vehement Jew-hater – even though his first wife (who died in 1933) was half-Jewish. Mosley's Blackshirts attracted the attention of Hitler and Mussolini, and he met both dictators several times in the 1930s.

The BUF rally at London's Earls Court in 1935 was attended by 8,000. These mass meetings were only part of the story. Mosley gave the Blackshirts a slogan: "We don't start fights - we only finish them". But Blackshirt marches in the East End of

London invited violence. The riots which followed forced the Government to ban the wearing of political uniforms.

In May 1940 Mosley, along with his second wife, Diana Mitford and other leading members of the BUF were imprisoned. He was released in 1943 due to ill health.

Right: Oswald Mosely was a charismatic figure who created a British fascist party on the Italian and German models. Discredited and imprisoned on the outbreak of war, he made an unsuccessful attempt to continue his political career in the postwar years.



Müller, Heinrich (1901 - ?)

Chief of the Gestapo and leading administrator of the Final Solution, Heinrich Müller was one of the most feared men in the Third Reich.

Born to a poor Catholic family in Munich, he served as a pilot on the Eastern Front during World War I. After the war he joined the Bavarian police, specialising in surveillance of subversives – which at the time included Nazis as well as communists.

His talents were recognised by Heydrich when the Nazis came to power, and from 1939 he was head of the Gestapo. In that role he was ruthlessly efficient in tracking down communists,

Jews and opponents of the Nazi regime. He was one of fifteen top-ranking Nazis who planned the Holocaust at the Wannsee Conference on 20 January 1942.

Even as Nazi Germany was being crushed from West and East in 1944-45, 'Gestapo' Müller continued the programme of extermination. He was responsible for making the concentration camps 'Jew Free', and refused to hand the camps over to the Red Cross in 1945.

Müller was present in the Führerbunker in April 1945 and interrogated Hermann Fegelein, Eva Braun's brother-in-law when he was arrested after attempting

to escape. Müller vanished in the final battle for Berlin, and it is likely that he died in the fighting.

Nevertheless, rumours abound that this most cunning of Nazis had long been in contact with the Communists, and that after the fall of Berlin he went to work for Stalin's NKVD, or that he had been spirited away by the Americans and lived a long life through the Cold War as an anti-communist adviser to the CIA.

See also Inside the Third Reich

Issue 3: Gestapo

See also Inside the Third Reich

Issue 7: The SS State



Above: SS-Gruppenführer Heinrich Müller was one of the most capable and most feared of Himmler's subordinates.

Müller, Ludwig (1883 - 1945)

Evangelical theologian and supporter of Hitler. Born in Gütersloh, he was a naval chaplain during WW I. He became a leading figure in the Association of German Christians, the strongly pro-nationalist evangelical group which supported the National Socialists. He was elected *Reichsbischof* or Reich Bishop in 1933, and was tasked by Hitler with creating a

united German evangelical church. He was opposed by the Confessional Church, which included a number of Bishops as well as the influential Pastors Niemöller and Bonheffer.

Müller's influence diminished from 1935 as Hitler turned ecclesiastical problems over to the Reich Church Commission. Müller died in Berlin on 31 July 1945, apparently by suicide.

Right: Ludwig Müller met Adolf Hitler in 1927. At the time he was serving as Wehrkreispfarrer (military district chaplain) at Königsberg in East Prussia. Appointed Hitler's personal plenipotentiary in Nazi dealings with the Evangelical Church, he offended many churchmen when in December 1933 he unilaterally transferred the Church Youth movement to the Hitlerjugend.



Munich Agreement

Signed on 30 September 1938, the agreement between Germany, Italy, France and Britain ceded the German speaking Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia to Germany.

The meeting came about in a hurry when in August Hitler had mobilised his army and threatened to attack the Czechs. Neville Chamberlain and Edouard Daladier, the British and French Prime Ministers, had a series of meetings in which they were pressurised by Hitler and in turn pressed the Czechs.

At Munich a modified version of Hitler's demands was deemed acceptable to the Anglo-French leaders, to the chagrin of the German generals. They had been

certain that France and Britain would call the Führer's bluff. Chamberlain's appeasement policy played into Hitler's hands, giving the Führer the chance to dominate his military commanders. But the agreement did buy the British time to build up their armaments industry and prepare for war that was to come twelve months later.

Right: Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, inspects an SS Guard of Honour on his arrival at Munich in September 1938. The agreement he signed with French premier Daladier and the leaders of the Axis powers sealed the fate of Czechoslovakia.



Munich Trial

Adolf Hitler appeared in a court of law on more than one occasion, but his most important defence came in 1924. The trial for high treason of the leaders of the 1923 Munich Beer Hall Putsch began on 24 February of that year. It attracted world wide attention, with over 100 reporters

covering a trial that included among the defendants General Erich Ludendorff. It gave Hitler his first audience outside Bavaria and he used his testimony to make powerful political speeches. Presiding Judge Neidhardt was at the very least a Nazi sympathiser. The chief prosecution witnesses

were State Commissioner Gustav Ritter von Kahr, commander of the German forces in Bavaria General Otto von Lossow, and Chief of the Bavarian State Police Colonel Hans von Seisser. The verdict was handed down on 1 April 1924. Ludendorff was found not guilty, though the

maximum sentence for high treason was life imprisonment, Hitler was sentenced to five years in the comfortable fortress prison of Landsberg.

See also Secret Hitler Files

Issue 15: Hitler's Putsch

Mussert, Anton (1894 - 1946)

The Dutch Nazi leader was born in Werkendam. An engineer by trade, he founded the *Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging* in 1931 as a direct imitation of the German movement. Following the German invasion in 1940, he and his organisation collaborated with the occupiers, though

Mussert had little influence on his masters. In 1942 Arthur Seyss-Inquart, the Governor of the Netherlands, named him as leader of the Dutch people. On 7 May 1945 he was arrested by the Dutch as a collaborator and hanged as a traitor in the Hague a year later.

Right: Anton Mussert was a tiny man, whose whole-hearted collaboration with the Nazi occupiers of Holland was to cost him his life.

See also Nazi Horrors

Issue 6: Collaborators



Mussolini, Benito Amilcare Andrea (1883 - 1945)

Born at Dovia in the commune of Predappio, Forlì Province, Benito Mussolini was a qualified teacher and socialist journalist before 1914. Breaking with the Socialists at the start of World War I, he served in the ranks until being wounded in a training accident.

Following the war he established the *Fasci di Combattimento* - Leagues of Combat. The Latin word *fascis* from which Facism is derived was chosen from the bundle of rods encircling an axe that was used in ancient Rome as a symbol of authority. He was known as *Il Duce* - the leader.

On 22 October 1922 he led 50,000 Fascists in the 'March on Rome', where he browbeat the government into making him Prime Minister. Hitler saw this as the model for his Beer Hall

Putsch, and Mussolini's theatrical use of uniforms, salutes, ceremonial and massive parades were to become a template for the Nazis.

When Hitler visited Mussolini in Italy it was as an up-and-coming politician visiting an established national leader, but the roles were to reverse by the outbreak of WW II. When Mussolini took Italy into the war on the side of Germany in 1940, the short-comings of the Italian war machine were quickly exposed firstly in the Balkans, North Africa and Russia.

Following the Allied invasion of mainland Italy in 1943, Mussolini was sacked by King Viktor Emmanuel who sued for peace. The imprisoned Mussolini was rescued by Hitler and set up a puppet Fascist state.

In 1945 *Il Duce* was captured by partisans while trying to escape into Switzerland. He and his mistress were executed at Como on 28 April. Their bodies were strung up in a public square in Milan.

Right: Benito Mussolini, the flamboyant creator of Italian Fascism, was a role model for Adolf Hitler in the early days of the Nazi Party. Hitler initially looked on him as a mentor, and the Führer never lost his admiration for Il Duce - the Leader - even when their relative positions were reversed and Germany became the dominant power in the Axis.

See also Inside the Third Reich

Issue 10: The Axis

See also Hitler's Battles

Issue 18: Sicily and Italy



COMING IN THE NEXT VOLUMES OF **HITLER'S** Third Reich

SECRET HITLER FILES

Hitler and Wagner
Mein Kampf



THE HOLOCAUST

Jews in Europe
Wannsee Conference



HITLER'S HENCHMEN

Baldur Von Schirach
Hans Frank

HITLER'S WAR MACHINE

Assault Guns
Ju 88
V-Weapons



INSIDE THE REICH

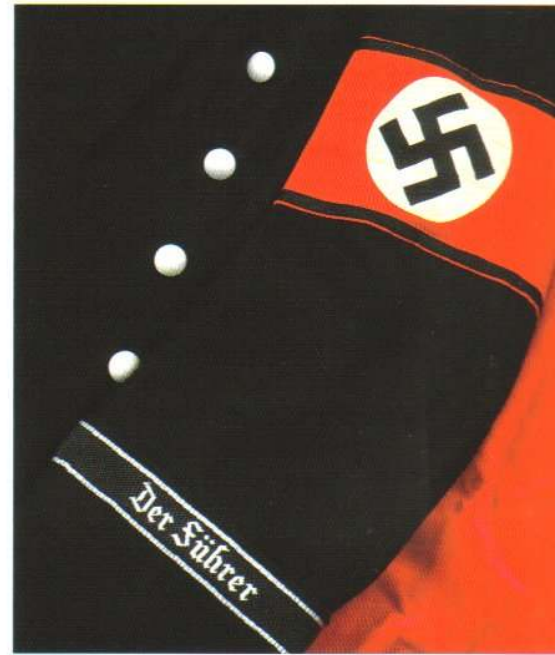
Church and State
Hitler's rivals
The Party State

NAZI HORRORS

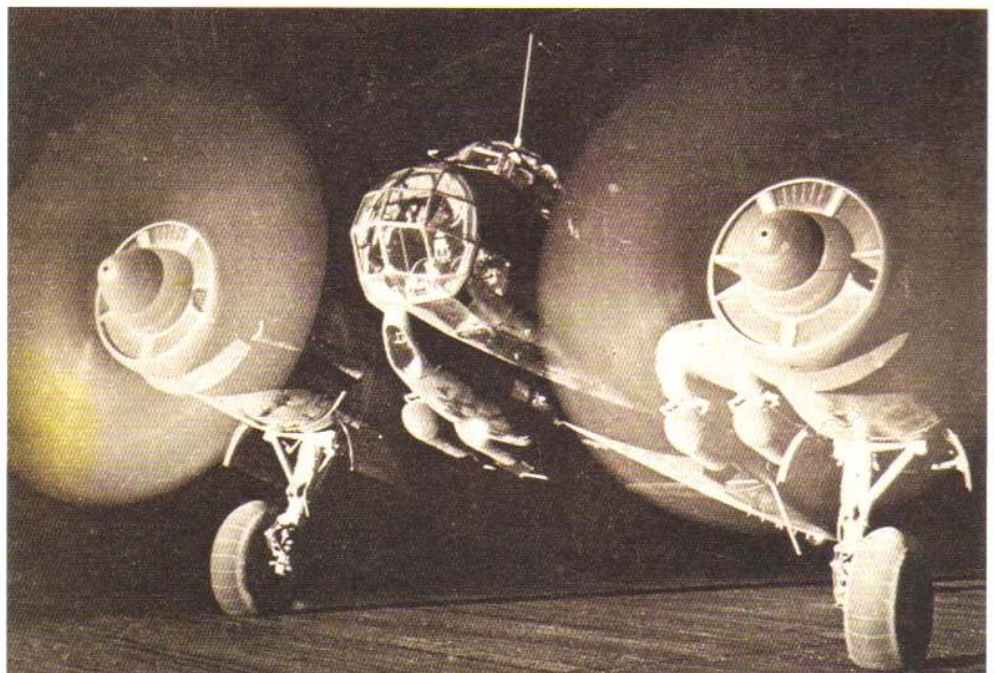
Occupation in the East
Camp commanders
Non-Jewish genocide

NAZI SYMBOLS

The Swastika
Afrika Korps
Cuff-titles



A-TO-Z OF THE THIRD REICH



IN THIS VOLUME OF **HITLER'S** **Third Reich**

SECRET HITLER FILES

Inspired by Mussolini's March on Rome, Hitler made his own bid for power on 8 November 1923. The fiasco left many dead and the Nazis outlawed.

INSIDE THE THIRD REICH

Joseph Goebbels had an innate understanding of the techniques of mass manipulation. Hitler's 'spin doctor' turned propaganda into an art form.



NAZI HORRORS

The Allies and history chose to make the Nazi leaders alone responsible for the Holocaust. But how much did ordinary Germans know?

HITLER'S BATTLES

After El Alamein Rommel's troops were harried by Montgomery in the east and the Americans in the west. Squeezed between these pincers the Germans were inevitably driven from Africa.



HENCHMEN

Hitler admired Sepp Dietrich for his mixture of cunning and ruthlessness – but to Army men like von Runstedt he was 'decent but stupid'.

NAZI SYMBOLS

Hitler as icon.

WAR MACHINE

Germany's *Fallschirmjäger* made the world's first large-scale parachute assaults. But the cost was so high at Crete that Hitler lost his nerve and forbade any repeats.

